

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

## A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N<sup>o</sup>. 92.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1861.

[PRICE 2d.

### GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

It is a most miserable thing to feel ashamed of home. There may be black ingratitude in the thing, and the punishment may be retributive and well deserved; but that it is a miserable thing, I can testify.

Home had never been a very pleasant place to me, because of my sister's temper. But, Joe had sanctified it, and I had believed in it. I had believed in the best parlour as a most elegant saloon; I had believed in the front door, as a mysterious portal of the Temple of State whose solemn opening was attended with a sacrifice of roast fowls; I had believed in the kitchen as a chaste though not magnificent apartment; I had believed in the forge as the glowing road to manhood and independence. Within a single year, all this was changed. Now, it was all coarse and common, and I would not have had Miss Havisham and Estella see it on any account.

How much of my ungracious condition of mind may have been my own fault, how much Miss Havisham's, how much my sister's, is now of no moment to me or to any one. The change was made in me; the thing was done. Well or ill done, excusably or inexcusably, it was done.

Once, it had seemed to me that when I should at last roll up my shirt-sleeves and go into the forge, Joe's 'prentice, I should be distinguished and happy. Now the reality was in my hold, I only felt that I was dusty with the dust of small-coal, and that I had a weight upon my daily remembrance to which the anvil was a feather. There have been occasions in my later life (I suppose as in most lives) when I have felt for a time as if a thick curtain had fallen on all its interest and romance, to shut me out from anything save dull endurance any more. Never has that curtain dropped so heavy and blank, as when my way in life lay stretched out straight before me through the newly-entered road of apprenticeship to Joe.

I remember that at a later period of my "time" I used to stand about the churchyard on Sunday evenings when night was falling, comparing my own perspective with the windy marsh view, and making out some likeness between them by thinking how flat and low both

were, and how on both there came an unknown way and a dark mist and then the sea. I was quite as dejected on the first working-day of my apprenticeship as in that after-time; but I am glad to know that I never breathed a murmur to Joe while my indentures lasted. It is about the only thing I am glad to know of myself in that connexion.

For, though it includes what I proceed to add, all the merit of what I proceed to add was Joe's. It was not because I was faithful, but because Joe was faithful, that I never ran away and went for a soldier or a sailor. It was not because I had a strong sense of the virtue of industry, but because Joe had a strong sense of the virtue of industry, that I worked with tolerable zeal against the grain. It is not possible to know how far the influence of any amiable honest-hearted duty-doing man flies out into the world; but it is very possible to know how it has touched one's self in going by, and I know right well that any good that intermixed itself with my apprenticeship came of plain contented Joe, and not of restlessly aspiring discontented me.

What I wanted, who can say? How can I say, when I never knew? What I dreaded was, that in some unlucky hour I, being at my grimiest and commonest, should lift up my eyes and see Estella looking in at one of the wooden windows of the forge. I was haunted by the fear that she would, sooner or later, find me out, with a black face and hands, doing the coarsest part of my work, and would exult over me and despise me. Often after dark, when I was pulling the bellows for Joe and we were singing Old Clem, and when the thought how we used to sing it at Miss Havisham's would seem to show me Estella's face in the fire with her pretty hair fluttering in the wind and her eyes scorning me,—often at such a time I would look towards those panels of black night in the wall which the wooden windows then were, and would fancy that I saw her just drawing her face away, and would believe that she had come at last.

After that, when we went in to supper, the place and the meal would have a more homely look than ever, and I would feel more ashamed of home than ever in my own ungracious breast.

#### CHAPTER XV.

As I was getting too big for Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's room, my education under that preposterous female terminated. Not, however,

until Biddy had imparted to me everything she knew, from the little catalogue of prieses, to a comic song she had once bought for a halfpenny. Although the only coherent part of the latter piece of literature were the opening lines,

When I went to Lunnon town sirs,

Too rul loo rul

Too rul loo rul

Wasn't I done very brown sirs,

Too rul loo rul

Too rul loo rul

—still, in my desire to be wiser, I got this composition by heart with the utmost gravity; nor do I recollect that I questioned its merit, except that I thought (as I still do) the amount of Too rul somewhat in excess of the poetry. In my hunger for information, I made proposals to Mr. Wopsle to bestow some intellectual crumbs upon me: with which he kindly complied. As it turned out, however, that he only wanted me for a dramatic lay-figure, to be contradicted and embraced and wept over and bullied and clutched and stabbed and knocked about in a variety of ways, I soon declined that course of instruction; though not until Mr. Wopsle in his poetic fury had severely mauled me.

Whatever I acquired, I tried to impart to Joe. This statement sounds so well, that I can not in my conscience let it pass unexplained. I wanted to make Joe less ignorant and common, that he might be worthier of my society and less open to Estella's reproach.

The old Battery out on the marshes was our place of study, and a broken slate and a short piece of slate pencil were our educational implements: to which Joe always added a pipe of tobacco. I never knew Joe to remember anything from one Sunday to another, or to acquire, under my tuition, any piece of information whatever. Yet he would smoke his pipe at the Battery with a far more sagacious air than anywhere else—even with a learned air—as if he considered himself to be advancing immensely. Dear fellow, I hope he did.

It was pleasant and quiet out there with the sails on the river passing beyond the earthwork, and sometimes, when the tide was low, looking as if they belonged to sunken ships that were still sailing on at the bottom of the water. Whenever I watched the vessels standing out to sea with their white sails spread, I somehow thought of Miss Havisham and Estella; and whenever the light struck aslant afar off, upon a cloud or sail or green hill-side or water-line, it was just the same.—Miss Havisham and Estella and the strange house and the strange life appeared to have something to do with everything that was picturesque.

One Sunday when Joe, greatly enjoying his pipe, had so plumped himself on being “most awful dull,” that I had given him up for the day, I lay on the earthwork for some time with my chin on my hand desirous traces of Miss Havisham and Estella all over the prospect, in the sky and in the water, until at last I resolved to mention a thought concerning them that had been much in my head.

“Joe,” said I; “don’t you think I ought to make Miss Havisham a visit?”

“Well, Pip,” returned Joe, slowly considering.

“What for?”

“What for, Joe? What is any visit made for?”

“There is some visits p’raps,” said Joe, “as for ever remains open to the question, Pip. But in regard of visiting Miss Havisham. She might think you wanted something—expected something of her.”

“Don’t you think I might say that I did not, Joe?”

“You might, old chap,” said Joe. “And she might credit it. Similarly she mightn’t.”

Joe felt, as I did, that he had made a point there, and he pulled hard at his pipe to keep himself from weakening it by repetition.

“You see, Pip,” Joe pursued, as soon as he was past that danger, “Miss Havisham done the handsome thing by you. When Miss Havisham done the handsome thing by you, she called me back to say to me as that were all.”

“Yes, Joe. I heard her.”

“All,” Joe repeated, very emphatically.

“Yes, Joe. I tell you, I heard her.”

“Which I meandersay, Pip, it might be that her meaning were—Make a end on it!—As you was!—Me to the North and you to the South!—Keep in sunders!”

I had thought of that too, and it was very far from comforting to me to find that he had thought of it; for, it seemed to render it more probable.

“But, Joe.”

“Yes, old chap.”

“Here am I, getting on in the first year of my time, and since the day of my being bound I have never thanked Miss Havisham, or asked after her, or shown that I remember her.”

“That’s true, Pip; and unless you was to turn her out a set of shoes all four round—and which I meandersay as even a set of shoes all four round might not act acceptable as a present, in a total vacancy of hoofs—”

“I don’t mean that sort of remembrance, Joe; I don’t mean a present.”

But Joe had got the idea of a present in his head and must harp upon it. “Or even,” said he, “if you was helped to knocking her up a new chain for the front door—or say a gross or two of shark-headed screws for general use—or some light fancy article, such as a toasting-fork when she took her muffins—or a gridiron when she took a sprat or such like—”

“I don’t mean any present at all, Joe,” I interposed.

“Well,” said Joe, still harping on it as though I had particularly pressed it, “if I was yourself, Pip, I wouldn’t. No, I would not. For what’s a door-chain when she’s got one always up? And shark-headers is open to misrepresentations. And if it was a toasting-fork, you’d go into brass and do yourself no credit. And the oncommonest workman can’t show himself oncommon in a gridiron—for a gridiron is a gridiron,” said Joe, steadfastly impressing it upon me, as if he were

endeavouring to rouse me from a fixed delusion, "and you may hain at what you like, but a gridiron it will come out, either by your leave or again your leave, and you can't help yourself—"

"My dear Joe," I cried, in desperation, taking hold of his coat, "don't go on in that way. I never thought of making Miss Havisham any present."

"No, Pip," Joe assented, as if he had been contending for that, all along; "and what I say to you, is, you are right, Pip."

"Yes, Joe; but what I wanted to say, was, that as we are rather slack just now, if you could give me a half holiday to-morrow, I think I would go up-town and make a call on Miss Est—Havisham."

"Which her name," said Joe, gravely, "ain't Estavisham, Pip, unless she have been re-chris'ened."

"I know, Joe, I know. It was a slip of mine. What do you think of it, Joe?"

In brief, Joe thought that if I thought well of it, he thought well of it. But, he was particular in stipulating that if I were not received with cordiality, or if I were not encouraged to repeat my visit as a visit which had no ulterior object but was simply one of gratitude for a favour received, then this experimental trip should have no successor. By these conditions I promised to abide.

Now, Joe kept a journeyman at weekly wages whose name was Orlick. He pretended that his christian name was Dolge—a clear impossibility—but he was a fellow of that obstinate disposition that I believe him to have been the prey of no delusion in this particular, but wilfully to have imposed that name upon the village as an affront to its understanding. He was a broad-shouldered loose-limbed swarthy fellow of great strength, never in a hurry, and always slouching. He never even seemed to come to his work on purpose, but would slouch in as if by mere accident; and when he went to the Jolly Barge-men to eat his dinner, or went away at night, he would slouch out, like Cain or the Wandering Jew, as if he had no idea where he was going and no intention of ever coming back. He lodged at a sluice-keeper's out on the marshes, and on working days would come slouching from his hermitage, with his hands in his pockets and his dinner loosely tied in a bundle round his neck and dangling on his back. On Sundays he mostly lay all day on sluice gates, or stood against ricks and barns. He always slouched, locomotively, with his eyes on the ground; and, when accosted or otherwise required to raise them, he looked up in a half resentful, half puzzled way, as though the only thought he ever had, was, that it was rather an odd and injurious fact that he should never be thinking.

This morose journeyman had no liking for me. When I was very small and timid, he gave me to understand that the Devil lived in a black corner of the forge, and that he knew the fiend very well: also that it was necessary to make up the fire once in every seven years, with a live

boy, and that I might consider myself fuel. When I became Joe's 'prentice, he was perhaps confirmed in some suspicion that I should displace him; howbeit, he liked me still less. Not that he ever said anything, or did anything, openly importing hostility; I only noticed that he always beat his sparks in my direction, and that whenever I sang Old Clem, he came in out of time.

Dolge Orlick was at work and present, next day, when I reminded Joe of my half-holiday. He said nothing at the moment, for he and Joe had just got a piece of hot iron between them and I was at the bellows; but by-and-by he said, leaning on his hammer:

"Now, master! Sure you're not a going to favour only one of us. If Young Pip has a half-holiday, do as much for Old Orlick." I suppose he was about five-and-twenty, but he usually spoke of himself as an ancient person.

"Why what'll you do with a half-holiday, if you get it?" said Joe.

"What'll I do with it! What'll *he* do with it? I'll do as much with it as *him*," said Orlick.

"As to Pip, he's going up-town," said Joe.

"Well then as to Old Orlick, *he's* going up-town," retorted that worthy. "Two can go up-town. Tant' only one wot can go up-town."

"Don't lose your temper," said Joe.

"Shall if I like," growled Orlick. "Some and their up-towing! Now, master! Come. No favouring in this shop. Be a man!"

The master refusing to entertain the subject until the journeyman was in a better temper, Orlick plunged at the furnace, drew out a red-hot bar, made at me with it as if he were going to run it through my body, whisked it round my head, laid it on the anvil, hammered it out—as if it were I, I thought, and the sparks were my spitting blood—and finally said, when he had hammered himself hot and the iron cold, and he again leaned on his hammer:

"Now, master?"

"Are you all right now?" demanded Joe.

"Ah! I am all right," said gruff Old Orlick.

"Then, as in general you stick to your work as well as most men," said Joe, "let it be a half-holiday for all."

My sister had been standing silent in the yard, within hearing—she was a most unscrupulous spy and listener—and she instantly looked in at one of the windows.

"Like you, you fool!" said she to Joe, "giving holidays to great idle hulkers like that. You are a rich man, upon my life, to waste wages in that way. I wish *I* was his master!"

"You'd be everybody's master, if you durst," retorted Orlick, with an ill-favoured grin.

("Let her alone," said Joe.)

"I'd be a match for all noodles and all rogues," returned my sister, beginning to work herself into a mighty rage. "And I couldn't be a match for the noodles without being a match for your master, who's the dunder-headed king of the noodles. And I couldn't be a match for the rogues, without being a match for you,

who are the blackest-looking and the worst rogue between this and France. Now!"

"You're a foul shrew, Mother Gargery," growled the journeyman. "If that makes a judge of rogues, you ought to be a good'un."

("Let her alone, will you?" said Joe.)

"What did you say?" cried my sister, beginning to scream. "What did you say? What did that fellow Orlick say to me, Pip? What did he call me, with my husband standing by? O! O! O!" Each of these exclamations was a shriek; and I must remark of my sister, what is equally true of all the violent women I have ever seen, that passion was no excuse for her, because it is undeniable that instead of lapsing into passion, she consciously and deliberately took extraordinary pains to force herself into it, and became blindly furious by regular stages; "what was the name he gave me before the base man who swore to defend me? O! Hold me! O!"

"Ah-h-h!" growled the journeyman, between his teeth, "I'd hold you, if you was my wife. I'd hold you under the pump, and choke it out of you."

("I tell you, let her alone," said Joe.)

"O! To hear him!" cried my sister, with a clap of her hands and a scream together—which was her next stage. "To hear the names he's giving me! That Orlick! In my own house! Me, a married woman! With my husband standing by! O! O!" Here my sister, after a fit of clapping and screaming, beat her hands upon her bosom and upon her knees, and threw her cap off and pulled her hair down—which were the last stages on her road to frenzy. Being by this time a perfect Fury and a complete success, she made a dash at the door, which I had fortunately locked.

What could the wretched Joe do now, after his disregarded parenthetical interruptions, but stand up to his journeyman, and ask him what he meant by interfering betwixt himself and Mrs. Joe; and further whether he was man enough to come on? Old Orlick felt that the situation admitted of nothing less than coming on, and was on his defence straightway; so, without so much as pulling off their singed and burnt aprons, they went at one another like two giants. But, if any man in that neighbourhood could stand up long against Joe, I never saw the man. Orlick, as if he had been of no more account than the pale young gentleman, was very soon among the coal-dust and in no hurry to come out of it. Then, Joe unlocked the door and picked up my sister, who had dropped insensible at the window (but who had seen the fight first, I think), and who was carried into the house and laid down, and who was recommended to revive, and would do nothing but struggle and clutch her hands in Joe's hair. Then, came that singular calm and silence which succeed all uproars; and then, with the vague sensation which I have always connected with such a lull—namely, that it was Sunday, and somebody was dead—I went up-stairs to dress myself.

When I came down again, I found Joe and

Orlick sweeping up, without any other traces of discomposure than a slit in one of Orlick's nostrils, which was neither expressive nor ornamental. A pot of beer had appeared from the Jolly Bargemen, and they were sharing it by turns in a peaceable manner. The lull had a sedative and philosophic influence on Joe, who followed me out into the road to say, as a parting observation that might do me good, "On the Rampage, Pip, and off the Rampage, Pip—such is Life!"

With what absurd emotions (for we think the feelings that are very serious in a man quite comical in a boy), I found myself again going to Miss Havisham's, matters little here. Nor how I passed and repassed the gate many times before I could make up my mind to ring. Nor, how I debated whether I should go away without ringing; nor, how I should undoubtedly have gone, if my time had been my own, to come back.

Miss Sarah Pocket came to the gate. No Estella.

"How, then? You here again?" said Miss Pocket. "What do you want?"

When I said that I only came to see how Miss Havisham was, Sarah evidently deliberated whether or no she should send me about my business. But, unwilling to hazard the responsibility, she let me in, and presently brought the sharp message that I was to "come up."

Everything was unchanged, and Miss Havisham was alone. "Well?" said she, fixing her eyes upon me. "I hope you want nothing? You'll get nothing."

"No indeed, Miss Havisham. I only wanted you to know that I am doing very well in my apprenticeship, and am always much obliged to you."

"There, there!" with the old restless fingers. "Come now and then; come on your birthday.—Ay!" she cried suddenly, turning herself and her chair towards me, "you are looking round for Estella? Hey?"

I had been looking round—in fact, for Estella—and I stammered that I hoped she was well.

"Abroad," said Miss Havisham; "educating for a lady; far out of reach; prettier than ever; admired by all who see her. Do you feel that you have lost her?"

There was such a malignant enjoyment in her utterance of the last words, and she broke into such a disagreeable laugh, that I was at a loss what to say. She spared me the trouble of considering, by dismissing me. When the gate was closed upon me by Sarah of the walnut-shell countenance, I felt more than ever dissatisfied with my home and with my trade and with everything; and that was all I took by that motion.

As I was loitering along the High-street, looking in disconsolately at the shop-windows, and thinking what I should buy if I were a gentleman, who should come out of the bookshop but Mr. Wopsle. Mr. Wopsle had in his hand the affecting tragedy of George Barnwell, in which he had that moment invested sixpence,

with the view of heaping every word of it on the head of Pumblechook, with whom he was going to drink tea. No sooner did he see me, than he appeared to consider that a special Providence had put a 'prentice in his way to be read at; and he laid hold of me, and insisted on my accompanying him to the Pumblechookian parlour. As I knew it would be miserable at home, and as the nights were dark and the way was dreary, and almost any companionship on the road was better than none, I made no great resistance; consequently, we turned into Pumblechook's just as the street and the shops were lighting up.

As I never assisted at any other representation of George Barnwell, I don't know how long it may usually take; but I know very well that it took until half-past nine o'clock that night, and that when Mr. Wopsle got into Newgate, I thought he never would go to the scaffold, he became so much slower than at any former period of his disgraceful career. I thought it a little too much that he should complain of being cut short in his flower after all, as if he had not been running to seed, leaf after leaf, ever since his course began. This, however, was a mere question of length and weariness. What stung me, was the identification of the whole affair with my unoffending self. When Barnwell began to go wrong, I declare that I felt positively apologetic, Pumblechook's indignant stare so taxed me with it. Wopsle, too, took pains to present me in the worst light. At once ferocious and maudlin, I was made to murder my uncle with no extenuating circumstances whatever; Millwood put me down in argument, on every occasion; it became sheer monomania in my master's daughter to care a button for me; and all I can say for my gasping and procrastinating conduct on the fatal morning, is, that it was worthy of the general feebleness of my character. Even after I was happily hanged and Wopsle had closed the book, Pumblechook sat staring at me, and shaking his head, and saying, "Take warning, boy, take warning!" as if it were a well-known fact that in my private capacity, I contemplated murdering a near relation, provided I could only induce one to have the weakness to become my benefactor.

It was a very dark night when it was all over, and when I set out with Mr. Wopsle on the walk home. Beyond town we found a heavy mist out, and it fell wet and thick. The turnpike lamp was a blur, quite out of the lamp's usual place apparently, and its rays looked solid substance on the fog. We were noticing this, and saying how that the mist rose with a change of wind from a certain quarter of our marshes, when we came upon a man slouching under the lee of the turnpike house.

"Halloo!" we said, stopping. "Orlick, there?"

"Ah!" he answered, slouching out. "I was standing by a minute, on the chance of company."

"You are late," I remarked.

Orlick not unnaturally answered, "Well? And you're late."

"We have been," said Mr. Wopsle, exalted with his late performance, "we have been indulging, Mr. Orlick, in an intellectual evening."

Old Orlick growled, as if he had nothing to say about that, and we all went on together. I asked him presently whether he had been spending his half-holiday up and down town?

"Yes," said he, "all of it. I come in behind yourself. I didn't see you, but I must have been pretty close behind you. By-the-by, the guns is going again."

"At the Hulks?" said I.

"Ay! There's some of the birds flown from the cages. The guns have been going since dark, about. You'll hear one presently."

In effect, we had not walked many yards further, when the well-remembered boom came towards us, deadened by the mist, and heavily rolled away along the low grounds by the river, as if it were pursuing and threatening the fugitives.

"A good night for cutting off in," said Orlick. "We'd be puzzled how to bring down a jail-bird on the wing, to-night."

The subject was a suggestive one to me, and I thought about it in silence. Mr. Wopsle, as the ill-requited uncle of the evening's tragedy, fell to meditating aloud in his garden at Camberwell. Orlick, with his hands in his pockets, slouched heavily at my side. It was very dark, very wet, very muddy, and so we splashed along. Now and then the sound of the signal cannon broke upon us again, and again rolled sulkily along the course of the river. I kept myself to myself and my thoughts. Mr. Wopsle died amiably at Camberwell, and exceedingly game on Bosworth Field, and in the greatest agonies at Glastonbury. Orlick sometimes growled, "Beat it out, beat it out—old Clem! With a clink for the stout—old Clem!" I thought he had been drinking, but he was not drunk.

Thus we came to the village. The way by which we approached it, took us past the Three Jolly Bargemen, which we were surprised to find—it being eleven o'clock—in a state of commotion, with the door wide open, and unwonted lights that had been hastily caught up and put down, scattered about. Mr. Wopsle dropped in to ask what was the matter (surmising that a convict had been taken), but came running out in a great hurry.

"There's something wrong," said he, without stopping, "up at your place, Pip. Run all!"

"What is it?" I asked, keeping up with him. So did Orlick, at my side.

"I can't quite understand. The house seems to have been violently entered when Joe was out. Supposed by convicts. Somebody has been attacked and hurt."

We were running too fast to admit of more being said, and we made no stop until we got into our kitchen. It was full of people; the whole village was there, or in the yard; and there was a surgeon, and there was Joe, and there were a group of women, all on the floor in the midst of the kitchen. The unemployed bystanders drew back when they saw me, and

so I became aware of my sister—lying without sense or movement on the bare boards where she had been knocked down by a tremendous blow on the back of the head, dealt by some unknown hand when her face was turned towards the fire—destined never to be on the Rampage again while she was wife of Joe.

### EARLIEST MAN.

A QUARTER of a century ago, even the most scientific minds were quite made up as to the question of human fossils. It was decided, once for all, that human fossils did not exist; and that any facts in favour of such a doctrine, which tended to upset a very satisfactory state of credence, would require a troublesome explanation, and were to be ignored. If that proved ineffectual, they were to be assigned to hasty generalisation, jumping at conclusions, &c. It is true that some few of those most favourably placed for hearing the first ground-swell of any little storm brewing, were not altogether satisfied; but the scientific world was quite at its ease. It had formed its decision, and was not in the least disposed to bother its scientific head further about the matter. Indeed, as has been most pertinently remarked, it is very disagreeable to have one's conclusions overturned. "The first impulse of human nature," says ANSTED, "is to put the unlucky discovery on one side—say nothing about it; most likely it will not bear investigating, and, therefore, don't let's have the trouble of investigating it."

What a pity that such a comfortable state of things cannot always endure! The plan of pooh-poohing anything is so extremely convenient, so satisfactory to one side at least, so warranted by precedent and authority, is always supported by such very respectable persons, and requires so little exertion of the intellect, that only a very troublesome person, a sort of atheist, in fact, would be guilty of trying to disturb it.

This is precisely what the scientific world felt when a very troublesome French gentleman—M. BOUCHER DE PERTHES—wanted it to believe that certain remains of man were to be found in the gravel. Scientific World said it was impossible; that the long interval of time between the deposition of this stratum, and that in which it is certain man existed, the destruction of so many races of animals in the intervening period without a trace of man, were quite opposed to it. All the human fossils as yet found were clearly of modern origin, and the greatest thinkers were quite of opinion that the gravel had been deposited ages before man was created; Professor Oolite had laughed at the idea that Sir Protogin Felspar couldn't see how the author was to make his theory out. M. de Perthes replied that he had positive proofs that remains left by man had been found in the gravel; he figured some hundreds of them very carefully, and published the figures in an octavo volume. Nay, he offered to show his specimens to the geological pundits of Paris. He could

not even obtain a hearing. Scientific World, not being able to confute this obstinate heretic, and not being in a position to burn him alive or to break him on the wheel, took the only course that remained. It refused to read his book. And a translation of part of it, which appeared at Liverpool, fell still-born from the press.

It was only in 1858 (eleven years after the said publication) that MR. BRISTON, of the Geological Survey, and DR. FALCONER, on carefully examining a cavern at Brixham, in Devon, found, along with the remains of the great cavern below, sculptured flints, such as are used by savages for lance and spear heads. Some of these were brought to London by Mr. Pengelly, who gave a lecture on them at the Royal Institution. In Sicily, Dr. Falconer also discovered in the borre breccia "a vast abundance of flint and agate knives." Scientific World did not like this, and endeavoured to show that they might be formed by "violent and long-continued gyration in water," which is about as possible as that they might have been shot at the earth by the man in the moon or the inhabitants of Saturn; or that they had been made by steam in antediluvian times, and buried in the gravel in order to mystify the learned.

M. Boucher de Perthes was now rapidly getting the upper hand, and, not satisfied with alarming Scientific World, he had it put upon its trial. He found the worn handles of wood and horn formerly attached to these spear and arrow heads. Scientific World winced, and would have persuaded people it had all along been convinced of the truth of these interesting discoveries; but it was too late. The investigations of Dr. Rigolot, Mr. Flower, and, still more, of Mr. Prestwich, who went, an unwilling observer, and was convinced when he saw the flint-beds of St. Acheul, of MM. Gandy, and George Pouchet, entirely confirmed M. de Perthes' view. Scientific World was found guilty, and condemned to death. Before execution, it confessed to having been guilty of the same crime sixty-two years ago, when Mr. John Frere published in England an account of similar objects found in the gravel of Hoxne, in Suffolk, below the sand, containing marine shells and gigantic land animals. Last dying speech and confession of Scientific World was published by Professors OWEN and ANSTED and SIR CHARLES LYELL, who assisted at the mournful ceremony.

We are now told that the existence of these old stone instruments, instead of being a myth, is an every-day affair. In England they are found from Cape Wrath to Land's End, from Galway to Yarmouth; and Mr. Keating, whose long stay in Upper Canada, in the neighbourhood of Lakes Superior and Huron, gave him ample means of acquiring information, says that it is quite a common thing to disinter them in that part of the world, and that the Indians profess to be totally ignorant of their use. We shall presently see that they are found in very distant parts of America. Professor Owen says that the flint weapons found in the gravel were

"unquestionably fashioned by human hands" (alas! poor Scientific World!), and Sir Charles Lyell expresses his conviction of "a vast lapse of ages separating the era in which the fossil implements were formed and that of the invasion of Gaul by the Romans."

Accordingly, it is no longer scientific to doubt that weapons made by the rude warriors of primeval days are to be found in strata containing remains of the mammoth. That human bones have not yet been met with, is no argument. The writer is old enough to remember the time when so few remains had been found of the megatherium, and so dark a cloud still rested on the subject, that a writer in the *Times* pronounced the views of geologists to be "disgusting nonsense unsupported by a shadow of proof." It is, indeed, scarcely possible that the puny races who seem to have first peopled the globe could have warred with these feeble implements against cavern bears as big as a horse; hyenas often larger than the largest modern tiger; the gigantic old English tiger, which, if coloured like that of Bengal, must have been the most magnificent creature that ever trod the earth; the machairodus, a terrific animal of a genus now altogether lost, provided with weapons which rendered it, if possible, more formidable than the tiger, its teeth being shaped like a saw; swarms of huge elephants so numerous, that from a bank off the little village of Happisburgh, in Norfolk, upwards of two thousand grinders of the mammoth have been dredged up by fishermen within thirteen years—and even this is not the richest locality, as the coast from Essex to Norfolk (including, of course, the spot where Mr. Frere found the remains) swarms with them; to which monsters, add the rhinoceros of that time with two huge horns, and buffaloes as large as elephants. It is more probable, from the little commingling of the remains, that man had rarely to defend himself except against the great pachydermis, and then only when they were fast verging to extinction. Perhaps, like some other races, he only made his appearance on the scene when the hour was already at hand which was to overwhelm all together beneath the devouring floods of the glacial drift.

It is singular that the discovery of this drift, by which so many of his contemporaries, and most probably pre-Adamite man himself, perished, should have been made so independently of the other, and so nearly at the same time. Like the theory of the pre-Adamites, to which it adapts itself like the counterpart in a puzzle, it was rejected by the scientific world, until, as Agassiz said, "the power of truth constrained a recognition of the justness of what used to produce only a compassionate smile as the lamentable aberration of an over-strained fancy."

There is now very little doubt that Britain, Sweden, Norway and Russia, Germany and France, with the mountainous parts of Tyrol and Switzerland, together with great part of Northern Asia, were at one time covered with ice. The British tourist may trace the path of

the huge boulders and crags hurled along by these mighty floods, or borne away on the icebergs, by the scratches on the rocks in the vale of Darberis in North Wales, on those of the mountain region which overlooks Windermere in Westmoreland, and in the gorge near Kilnarney known as the Gap of Dunloe. On the flanks of Mount Jura, not far from Neufchâtel, are to be seen enormous boulders of protogine (a peculiar kind of granite), the nearest site of which is the valley of the Rhône above its embouchure where it falls into the lake of Geneva, seventy miles from the spot where the boulders are found. The great boulder-stone of Borrowdale, and that on which the statue of Peter the Great now stands, must have been transported from a distance. North Germany is strewn with boulders rent from the mountains of Scandinavia, and which, it is most strongly argued, could only have been carried by such agency as icebergs.

All honour, then, to MM. Agassiz and Boucher de Perthes for the heroic resolution with which they held on their way through many long years, disregarding alike cold indifference and active hostility, studied sneers and time-serving criticism; but the honour of the discovery that man really waged war against the great pachyderms and sloths is due (under correction) to a long-forgotten name: one which, so far as I can discover, has not been mentioned by any of the writers who have entered upon the controversy. It is that of Albert Koch, who, in 1841, published at Louisville an account of the finding of the Missourium or mastodon of the Missouri, the skeleton of which creature now forms a noble and imposing object in the British Museum, and furnishes certain proofs that this huge brute had been assailed by hunters. "There was embedded," he says, in his quaint half German, half Yankee style, "immediately under the femur, or hind leg-bone, of this animal, an arrow-head of rose-coloured flint, resembling those used by the American Indians, but of larger size. This was the only arrow-head 'immediately' with the skeleton; but in the same strata, at a distance of five or six feet, in a horizontal direction, four more arrow-heads were found; three of these were of the same formation as the preceding; the fourth was of a very rude workmanship. One of the last-mentioned three was of agate, the others of blue flint. These arrow-heads are indisputably the work of human hands. I examined the 'deposite' in which they were embedded, and raised them out of the 'embedding' with my own hands."

Mr. Koch distinctly expresses his belief that there was a human race "existing contemporary" with the mastodons, and that the fact of their remains not having been found was owing to these "relics" of the ancient world having been generally investigated by persons not aware of the necessity for a minute examination—a view which he supports by the following narrative:

A farmer living on the banks of the Burbois River, in the Gasconade country, Missouri, re-

marked a very disagreeable taste in the water used for household purposes. It was taken from a spring near the house, and, in order to get rid of this nuisance, he dug round the spring with a view of making it into a well. While doing so, he brought to light several bones belonging to an animal of unusual size, and along with them a stone knife and an Indian axe. The affair was talked of throughout the whole neighbourhood, and Mr. Koch, hearing of it, started off to see the remains.

On his arrival, he found that most of the arms had been destroyed, having been dug out carelessly and exposed to the air; some had been broken, to see if they contained any marrow! An intelligent gentleman, however, of the name of Baily, had collected others, which he gave to Mr. Koch. They appear to have belonged to one of the gigantic extinct sloths. On making further search, Mr. Koch found, nine feet below the surface close to the site of the remains, a layer of ashes mixed with charcoal, large pieces of wood partly burned, together with Indian implements of war, as stone arrow-heads, tomahawks, &c., and above a hundred and fifty pieces of rock, which had evidently been brought from the river, three hundred yards off, and thrown at the animal. Some of the animal's teeth had been broken by the blows, and had escaped the fire with which the hunters had sought to finish their work.

The sloth could not have been a very formidable foe, except in appearance. The mammoth, however, was a most powerful brute, and of colossal size: the skeleton being thirty-two feet long and fifteen feet high, with tusks ten feet long, and rooted fifteen inches in the head. Whether this animal lost its life by hunters, or had perished in a tornado, as might be inferred from the circumstance of some of the trees, the fragments of which were found near the animal, "having been torn up by the roots, and twisted and split into a thousand pieces, apparently by lightning, combined with a tremendous tempest," it is certain that the finding of the arrow-heads in both cases, so near the bones of these monsters, coincides far too strongly with the discoveries of M. de Perthes to have been the effect of mere chance. It is also to be remarked that along with the skeleton were found leaves of the cypress, great part of a huge flower, and several stems of the palmetto; in themselves evidence that if man had not yet appeared on the scene, his hour was at hand.

Mr. Koch has endeavoured to prove that his Missouri was the Leviathan of Job. The strength of jaw, the faculty of trumpeting, the toughness of skin, the ferocious and formidable appearance, the teeth "terrible round about," the strength of the neck (showing that the Leviathan was not a crocodile, which has no neck), are, to a certain extent, in favour of the view; but the present writer must express his conviction that, so far as ascertained proofs go, the animal meant in Job was the mammoth.

If science and religion can alike appeal to

rude tradition for confirmation of such mighty events as the Deluge; if both can find in the concurring legends of tribes scattered far apart, proofs which even the most sceptical dare not refuse; the writer may be pardoned for seeking to rescue from oblivion, a fragment of the hoary old time, singularly in keeping with the views now so generally adopted.

In far distant ages the Indian steered his canoe over what are now the vast prairies of Missouri. At a certain epoch, an army of gigantic brutes (the mastodons, &c.) came from the east, and, mounting the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, a furious battle began between them and the native monsters of those rivers. Great numbers fell on both sides; but, after several desperate combats the intruders seem to have prevailed, and resumed their march towards the setting sun. The greatest of all these fights took place near the bluffs now known as the Rocky Ridge; and, as soon as the fight was over, the Indians gathered together many of the slaughtered animals (strangely confirming the burning of the great sloth by the Burbois river), and burned them, as a sacrifice to the Great Spirit, who—according to their traditions himself buried the rest in the Bigbone river. Thither, in the happy days of old, the Indians went yearly, to offer up near the spot their thanksgivings for deliverance from these formidable creatures. But as years rolled by, the pale faces came, and a settler sought to build his homestead on this fertile part of the land; the Indians lighted the council-fire and smoked the red calumet of war, and the white man was glad to fly. He came again, but some old chiefs returned and expelled him, and from that day, until the strong hand of government removed them, no bribe could induce them to give up this hallowed ground. When they had quitted it, the settler came again; and one of the first things he did was, like the patriarchs of old, to dig a well. Here, he found several bones of young mastodons, and might have found more but that he had to give up digging. Soon after this, the place was sold, and then a young man employed to clean the spring found a mastodon's tooth. Others came, and found more bones, until at last, in March, 1840, the matter reaching Mr. Koch's ears, he repaired to the spot, and disinterred the remains of the mastodon, which he afterwards exhibited at the Egyptian Hall.

Every land that has a history can tell how its first kings and giant warriors conquered and ruled the earth. In the East, perhaps, more than in any other clime, these dreams have not only maintained their vitality, but, in some cases, have been invested with a splendour and reality denied to the tales of more sober Europe. One of the most striking of the gorgeous scenes in Vathek is the picture of the fleshless forms of the pre-Adamite kings, lying on beds of incorruptible cedar. Strange if some skilful penman should one day have the means presented to him of welding into a great fact, the traditions of the most polished nations of the

East, the lands of Firdousi and Zoroaster, of Haroun al Raschid and Zobeyde, the brilliant imagery of Job, the long-forgotten legends of the hapless Ottawa Indians, and the discoveries of a Frenchman in the valley of the Somme!

### SOME RAILWAY POINTS.

We have had occasion to see and hear a good deal along the line of this railway and that, as doing our part towards making up the six hundred and forty million of journeys performed by rail every year in the United Kingdom. We were not among the victims of that paternal wrath whereof we have read in one of the reports of Captain Galton, government railway inspector. "A girl who was in love with the engine-driver of a train, had engaged to run away from her father's house in order to be married. She arranged to leave by a train this man was driving. Her father and brother got intelligence of her intended escape; and having missed catching her as she got into the train, they contrived, whether with or without the assistance of a porter is not very clear, to turn the train through facing points, as it left the station, into a bog." The report omits to state the result of this daring scheme for stopping a runaway couple.

We know something about stations, and the state of things behind the pigeon-holes at which you pay your fare. When the traveller by rail having reached his journey's end gives up his ticket, he has done with it, but the pasteboard has a great deal more to go through. The company having got it back again, has a watchful eye to its future career. All tickets, anywhere collected, are made up daily into bundles; duly scheduled as to their number, class, and station. These bundles are despatched to the audit office. There they are checked by the returns sent in from all stations at which tickets were issued. If any are missing, notice is sent to the station where they should have been collected, and the reason of their absence is required. In the case of through tickets—that is, of tickets issued between two stations on different lines, as between London and Scarbro'—both tickets and returns are forwarded to the railway clearing house, to be there checked, and for the mileage division due to each company on such traffic to be declared.

The young gentleman of pleasing manners, who hands you your ticket through a pigeon-hole, and flings about sovereigns and silver as if coin came as natural to him as mud comes to a hippopotamus, has a few duties to keep him awake while you are travelling. After issuing a couple of hundred tickets to fifty or sixty different stations, each paid for at a different rate, he has to make up his train book, and balance his cash to a farthing. When he opens his ticket case, and throws up his little window to begin booking a train, his tickets are all smoothly arranged in their cases; while, on a slip of slate above each set of tickets, is marked the

commencing number for that set's particular station—that is to say, the number printed on the next ticket that will be issued to the public. When he takes a ticket out of one of these compartments, and, after pushing it into a press to date it, hands it to the passenger, by a quick movement of the finger he at the same time half draws out the next ticket, and so on with each case till he has booked the whole of his train. The half-drawn tickets left when he comes to make up his account, show him at a glance not only to what stations there have been issues, and so save him the necessity of going through his entire case of tickets, but their numbers compared with the commencing numbers on the slips of slate, at once give the number of each sort of intermediate ticket issued. These are what he has got to account for, and to balance with the cash he has received. That duty done, he is at liberty to turn his attention to some of the interminable returns required either by audit, clearing house, or parliament; from one or another of which he is seldom free, till the time comes for him to book the next batch of passengers. We are glad to know that one northern railway company has for some time past employed at some of its stations women as booking clerks.

The different systems of check and audit employed by large companies against the fraud and dishonesty, not only of the public, but of their own servants, are very complicated. In the old days of great dividends paid out of little profit, everything was taken for granted more than it is now; the honesty of men who stood well with the world was held to be unimpeachable; and figures were believed in. One after another, great exposures shook this confidence, and by the slow growth of years, a complicated system of check and counter-check, extending from the highest official to the lowest, working in and out from one return to another, from this department to that department, has come into use. Whether in all cases its end is answered, there is some reason to doubt.

There is one well-known weak point. No railway company can set up a complete check against dishonesty in dealing with the excess fares, which at a principal station amount to a large sum in the course of a month. Mr. Twiddle takes a second-class ticket, but for some reason chooses to perform part of his journey in a first-class carriage; or, he takes a third-class return ticket, and chooses to make the return journey by second-class. At his journey's end, the ticket-collector demands of him payment for the difference between the two fares. The differences thus collected are known as "excess fares," and are supposed to be paid in with due particulars by the man who collects them. But what if he pays in only three-fourths, or even one-half, of what he thus receives, who is the wiser? There is no regular check upon him, and that large gains have been made in this way by collectors in different parts of the country, is a well-ascertained fact in railway history. Still, the game is a dangerous one to play; the

system of detection being to employ a man, personally unknown to guards and collectors, to take his ticket like an ordinary passenger, but travels part of the way in a different class, so as to be muleted in excess. A note of the amount paid is taken, and should the collector not account for it accurately, he suffers immediate expulsion.

In spite of all precautions used by railway companies to insure themselves against frauds of dishonest passengers, cases are now and then disclosed which go to prove how impossible it is to guard every loophole against ingenious trickery. For example: It is customary with all railway companies to issue half-yearly or annual tickets to persons travelling frequently between any two stations. Mr. B., a man holding a respectable position in society, and living about ten miles out of London, was for two years the purchaser of an annual ticket from a certain company; and, as he travelled to and fro every day, his face soon was so well known to guards and collectors that he was seldom called upon to show his ticket. At the end of the second year, instead of purchasing a third annual ticket, he had a ticket manufactured similar in appearance to those issued by the manager of the company, and with that gentleman's signature neatly forged on the back. With this forged ticket Mr. B. succeeded in travelling daily for nine months between his house and London. It was only through his losing it in a cab—through which accident it got into the superintendent's hands—that the fraud was discovered.

The proceeds of the sales by auction of left property to which owners cannot be found, serve in some measure to reimburse the railway companies for their numerous losses by thieves. Notwithstanding all vigilance, and abundant means at command in the way of detectives and policemen, robberies on railways are very common: not merely robberies from the person, or of travellers' luggage, but systematic and skilfully planned robberies from merchandise trucks while in transit. In many cases, of course the thief or thieves—for there are sometimes gangs of men connected with such depredations—are detected; but it frequently happens that in spite of all inquiries and precautions, goods are purloined no one can tell how or where. Cloth, silk raw and manufactured, fancy goods of all kinds, hampers of game, fruit, boots and shoes, wines, and even cheese, vanish mysteriously. For the more valuable classes of goods, lock-up trucks with iron roofs are now coming into general use, and they are protection against fire as well as robbery. In one case the thief was killed in the very act of robbery. The wagon robbed, formed one of a train from London to the north, which had to be shunted into a certain siding about two o'clock every morning, until the mail train passed. This siding was on the top of a very high embankment, and lay open on both sides, to the fields. The train had been robbed once or twice a week for two months or more, and all the

vigilance of the officials was at fault in the endeavour to detect the culprit. But he was found at daybreak one winter morning, a mangled mass lying across the rails of the siding, with the contents of a caddy of tea, which he had taken out of the truck, scattered about him. He had clambered up the embankment while the train was waiting, had unfastened the sheet of the truck, had crept inside, and picked out a caddy of tea. But, while in the act of getting down, the engine had given a sudden jerk at the train, causing him to lose his footing. So, he fell between the waggons, of which several passed over his body.

A series of mysterious cheese robberies took place some years ago, and were never detected. Three or four times a week, for several months, one or two cheeses would be taken out of a train of twenty or more trucks, all laden with cheese. As a last resource a man was put into one of the trucks, sheeted over, and sent on a dreary journey of a hundred and fifty miles, armed with a dark lantern, and a policeman's truncheon. But though the thefts continued, no thief ever came near the truck in which the man lay hidden. These robberies ceased as mysteriously as they had begun, when cheese enough to stock a small warehouse had been stolen.

One of the most daring railway robberies on record, was a robbery of passengers' luggage that took place several years ago, on one of the metropolitan lines. The London season having come to an end, a noble family left town for the east coast. The boxes and packages were large and numerous. There was a brass-bound box, containing a selection of plate. Instructions were given for this box to be put under a seat in a carriage; but, as it was too large to be so placed, it was packed on the roof with the rest of the luggage; the whole being protected by a tarpaulin cover, carefully fastened down. The train was the afternoon express, which stopped only at three or four large stations during the whole of the journey, and arrived at its destination two hours after dark. On the arrival of the train, it was found that the brass-bound box had been robbed, in transit, of a considerable part of its contents. Upon investigation of the case, it appeared that a person not altogether unknown to the police, had been seen lounging about the London platform before the starting of the train. Immediately after it was gone, he telegraphed in cipher to a certain station in the country. When the train arrived at this station, it was joined by the person who received the message, and who was shown by the guard into an empty compartment. As soon as it was dark, this man must have opened the door of his compartment, and while the train was going at a speed of forty miles an hour, must have traversed whatever number of carriages there may have been between him and the box; must have mounted to the roof of the carriage; must have unfastened the tarpaulin; picked out the box from among twenty other heavy packages; forced it open,

and disposed of as much of its contents about his person as he could remove; finally, he must have refastened the tarpaulin, and got back safe and unseen to his own carriage. Encumbered with a somewhat bulky portmanteau, he quitted the train at the next station, unsuspected.

By mail train there arrived one night at a certain station in the north of England, a large hamper, booked as containing a live dog, and addressed to a clergyman in Lincolnshire. The hamper was taken into the parcels' office, to await the departure of the train by which it was to go forward. The clerks, as soon as they had ten minutes to spare, being curious, as it became them to be, concerning the breed and culture of dogs, unfastened the hamper, which was merely tied with a piece of thick string. No sooner was the lid fairly opened, than the specimen, with a loud snarl, and a yell of as much terror as anger, sprang clean out of the hamper, cleared the office in two bounds, and sped away down the platform at his swiftest. Chase was immediately given, joined in by all the guards and porters about, but the dog was irretrievably gone—swallowed up by darkness—far away in two minutes among sidings, and waggon, and dead engines, where pursuit was useless. What was to be done? The dog had certainly been received, and it would not do to send the hamper forward empty.

Blank despair overwhelmed the clerks, till a whisper of suggestion came at length from one of them: "Why not send Nipper?" Nipper was a rough and venerable animal, of all sorts of breed, who lived by prowling round the station, taking all the kicks he got in hope of victuals. He was a desperate old thief, and he looked as disreputable as he was. But the case was an extreme one, and accordingly Nipper was hunted up from his snooze in the cloak-room, was feasted sumptuously, and was decorated with a pink ribbon fastened round his neck, and tied in a bow under his chin, to show that he was out for holidays. Thus prepared for travel, he was carefully packed up in the hamper, which was forwarded to its address by the next train. No complaint, we believe, was ever made to the railway, and we hope that, for the sake of the friend who did *not* send him, Nipper died in clover, after having won, as the clergyman's dog, respect throughout his parish.

Let us turn from these incidents of Railways made, to glance at a few Railways, making or to be made.

Certain columns of the *Times* newspaper, at this season of the year, contain the announcements of all those joint-stock companies who are prepared to apply to parliament in the next session for power to carry out their designs. These long blocks of words are put into the smallest advertising type, are headed with the least attractive of titles, and are drawn up in the driest legal style of English composition. There is nothing in their form or preamble to induce a general reader to examine their contents; and the result is, that projects

more revolutionary in their effects upon persons and places than an Indian rebellion or a Parisian riot, are able to give that "preliminary notice" of their birth which is required by parliamentary regulations, without disturbing even the timidest and oldest inhabitant amongst us. Whole parishes are threatened with demolition, venerable churches and landmarks are to be elbowed on one side, half-buried monuments of antiquity are to be ploughed up, like the decayed stump of an old tooth, ground into powder, and scattered to the four winds; the ancient ways upon which our forefathers stood, made bargains, drank, feasted, and trained their children, are to be deserted, closed, built upon, transformed, or utterly destroyed; grand, gloomy stacks of time-honoured mansions—the traditional abode of kings—the known dwelling-places of old London's merchant-princes—are to be plastered over with the bills of some authorised auctioneer, to be sold as "old rubbish" to the sound of a wooden hammer, to be torn to pieces by eager labourers, who totter on falling rafters, and risk their lives that not a moment of the precious time shall be lost, and to be carted off in a hundred waggons, leaving not a trace behind.

It seems that we are to be allowed no rest from railway engineering operations, until the great idea of a central station in the City of London is made to take material shape. Every railway, at present condemned to have its terminus in the outskirts, is looking wistfully towards that coveted spot within the shadow of St. Paul's, and making signs to its brethren to join hands and help in drawing the circle together. The Eastern Counties Railway is not content to remain at Shoreditch; the Great Western is dissatisfied with Paddington; the North-Western and the Great Northern are not happy at Euston-square and King's-cross; the Brighton Railway is discontented with Southwark, although it has stretched out in a round-about direction, and has succeeded in crossing the river at Battersea, and in reaching Pimlico; the South-Eastern has already taken steps to push on to Hungerford-market by the way of the Suspension-bridge, where it expects to be joined by the South-Western Railway, which is fretting down in the hollow of the Waterloo-road; and the Greenwich, Chatham, Southend, and other lines, are all directing their eyes to one common centre. Where this centre will be, yet remains to be seen. At one time public report, as well as engineering projectors, pointed very decidedly to the open space in Farringdon-street, where formerly stood the famous Fleet Prison. That area seems now to be given up, and every eye is turned to Finsbury-circus. This neighbourhood of Greek merchants, institutions, and chapels—if parliament and railway shareholders prove willing—shall become the home of the great central railway station. The project involves connecting lines of railway above and below ground, the appropriation of many existing streets and alleys, and the construction of new thoroughfares. Many people will shake their

heads when they hear of this plan; but, while they doubt, the necessary powers and the more necessary capital will probably be obtained, and the work will be begun in as earnest a spirit as that of the "Underground Railway." It is not many months since the public shook its head, and laughed at the idea of a railroad among the sewers. The omnibus and cab interests, as represented by their drivers, were particularly facetious on the subject: forgetting what their predecessors, the stage-coachmen, had predicted of railroads in general, and how signally those predictions had failed.

Much nonsense has been talked about the Metropolitan Underground Railway, since it began its engineering operations under Mr. Jay and the other contractors; and it is widely supposed that its sole "mission" is to relieve the over-charged road traffic of the City. General observers peep through the long walls of thin boards which enclose its labourers, its shafts, and its engines, and, as they see men descending and ascending to and from the bowels of the earth, they conclude that some wonderful sub-way is being constructed that will drain off the meat "blocks" of Newgate-street, the carriage "blocks" of Ludgate-hill, and transform London-bridge from a bridge of curses into an agreeable lounge. All this, and more, the Metropolitan Railway may do, through combinations, extensions, and improvements; but, at present, it is merely to be a connecting link between the Great Western, North Western, and Great Northern Railways, which, when constructed and opened about the close of 1861, will begin at Paddington, and end temporarily near Clerkenwell-green.

The important centre of the Metropolitan Railway works is at King's-cross, coming within Mr. Jay's contract, which extends from the proposed terminus in Clerkenwell to Euston-square. It is there that the chief and only combined junction on this line will be made, out of the City, and it is there that the chief engineering difficulties of the work have arisen.

The main tunnel, running from one terminus to the other, will contain a double line of rails, and it will be twenty-eight feet and a half high, and sixteen feet and a half broad. The branch tunnels will contain a single line of rails, and be thirteen feet eight inches broad, and fifteen feet high. One of these branch tunnels is now completed, and it runs up Maiden-lane for about a quarter of a mile, and enters the Great Northern line above the station.

The underground plan at King's-cross, if drawn on paper, would be very much in the form of the letter X standing in a horizontal line. The horizontal line is the main railroad from King's-cross to Paddington, which becomes curved at the junction, and winds towards the City by way of Bagnigge-wells, the House of Correction, and the upper part of New Farringdon-street. The cross, or letter X, goes up from left to right, into the Maiden-lane branch, from the New-road, and comes down from left to right, from the Great Northern Hotel in Old St. Pancras-lane, on to the main line. The lower triangle, formed

by the roots of the two oblique lines where they join the horizontal or main line, is filled up with a condemned-cell looking structure, having arched loopholes, in which will be placed the "pointsmen" of the railway, so as to command a view in every direction. At present, it is a dismal well dug in the wet clay; but a little time and labour will soon change all that.

The process of tunnelling under the London streets is very different from the similar process in the open country. The material to be penetrated may not be always so hard and unyielding as the rock formations, but it is so full of delicate channels which must not be rudely disturbed, that the labour is rendered twenty-fold more difficult and more expensive. The bed of a London thoroughfare may be compared to the human body—for it is full of veins and arteries which it is death to cut. There are the water-mains, with their connecting pipes; the main or branch sewers, with their connecting drains; the gas mains, with their connecting pipes; and very often, the tubes containing long lines of telegraph-wire. If the gravel and clay be opened, at any time, a few yards under our feet, we catch a glimpse of these tubular channels, lying nearly as close together as the pipes of a church organ. The engineers of the Metropolitan Railway have had to remove all these old channels to the sides of the roadway, steering their tunnel in between, with the delicacy of a surgical operation. At King's-cross a greater difficulty presented itself in the shape of the old Fleet Ditch—a stream of sewage-water flowing from Highgate to the Thames, out of fifty thousand houses. This black Styx of London will often rise six feet in an hour, in stormy weather, and its force is particularly felt at King's-cross, which lies at the bottom of the Highgate slope. It was found necessary to divert the course of this unruly stream, and to lock up that portion of its current which flowed through the line the railway was compelled to take. This was done under the personal direction of the able superintendent of the works, Mr. Houslander; but not without many men being kept up nearly a fortnight in wet and mud, night and day, until at last their sewer-boots had to be cut off their legs. The slightest mistake would have flooded the works, and would have cost Mr. Jay, the contractor, some thirty thousand pounds. The black river is now safely caged, and a large boiler-looking tube, running across the roof at one part of the railway tunnel, carries the Fleet Ditch over the heads of the workmen—and will carry it over the heads of the passengers.

The inhabitants on each side of the New-road have often travelled upon railways, and have doubtless often wondered how a tunnel was made, and what sort of men they were who made it. An opportunity is now afforded them of learning much upon this subject, without leaving the warm shelter of their drawing-rooms or bedrooms. A few wooden houses on wheels first make their appearance in the road, and squat, like Punch and Judy shows, at the side

of the gutter. A few waggons next arrive, well loaded with timber and planks, and accompanied by a number of gravel-coloured men with pick-axes and shovels. In a day and a night, or little more, a few hundred yards of roadway are enclosed, and a strange quiet reigns for a time, in consequence of the carriage traffic being diverted. The omnibuses that used to form an endless rumbling procession before the windows, are turned down small back streets and winding alleys, while the outside passengers are sometimes nearly rubbed against the houses, or have to stoop to avoid barbers' poles, and other trading projections. The calm of the main thoroughfare is soon disturbed by the arrival of steam-engines, horses, carpenters, and troops of "navvies," within the enclosure. The sound of pickaxes, spades, and hammers, the puffing of steam, and the murmur of voices, begin : never to cease for some months, day or night. Huge timber structures spring up at intervals along the centre of the road, where the spots for opening shaft-holes are marked out, and it is not many hours before iron buckets and chains are at work, dragging up the heart of the roadway. This rubbish is carted off on a tramway as quickly as possible, and tilted down a gaping pit, with a noise like distant thunder, to be carried away into the country along the underground branch railway already completed. Notwithstanding this labour and arrangement, the gravel scatters itself among the houses overlooking the works ; the mistresses complain of living in a perpetual "mess," the servants declare their inability to keep door-steps and passages clean in the face of such an earthquake ; the front gardens are often trespassed upon, and huge pieces of timber are planted against some of the houses to prevent their falling forward into the street. A father of a family looks out of his window one morning after shaving, and finds a large breezy "clearance" among his neighbours' houses to the right or left, which ventilates the neighbourhood, but fills his mind with doubts about the stability of his dwelling. A wet week comes, and the gravel in his front garden turns to clay ; the tradespeople tread it backwards and forwards to and from the street door ; he can hardly get out to business, or home to supper, without slipping ; and he strongly objects to a temporary way of wet planks, erected for his use, and the use of the passers-by, over a yawning cavern underneath the pavement. Sometimes irritated by seeing his railings broken, and by what he thinks an unwarrantable encroachment upon his liberties as an Englishman, he dreams of Chancery injunctions, and instructs his solicitor to serve all kinds of "notices" on the contractor.

If a wet week, or a wet month, tries the temper of a neighbourhood suffering under the infliction of railway works in the middle of the thoroughfares, it also tries the temper of the contractor. Four or five hundred men have to be paid every Saturday night, although the weather has kept them idle all the week, and the capital invested in plant and machinery is

"eating its head off." This latter represents no mean sum, when we have to calculate the value of tunnel supports and scaffoldings at from five to fifteen pounds a yard. The very stuff that we call "dry rubbish," which is thrown on the roadway of a tunnel when it is finished, cannot be bought under six shillings a yard. Luckily, a large contractor has too much work on his hands, in different places, to allow him to be idle or melancholy. While Mr. Jay is carrying out the principal channel of this underground railway, he is building the government fortifications at Portland, and a railroad in Wales, and is attending to most contract orders that come from the corporation of London.

The Metropolitan, or Underground Railway, as an Institution, is only just begun. From three to four hundred millions sterling of property, invested in English railways, is constantly pressing for an universal junction throughout the country, and also in London, the heart of the system. An underground railroad, if parliament be willing, will soon join the Brighton line at Pimlico to Bayswater and the Great Western Railway, by a channel under Kensington Gardens. The Charing-cross branch of the South-Eastern will push on from Hungerford-market to the New-road : thereby attaching itself through the Underground Railway, with the three great main lines on that side — the Great Northern, North-Western, and Great Western. The Regent's Canal will be turned into a railway, and the Great Northern, at King's-cross, will be thus connected with the Eastern Counties' lines. When this is done, the junction of all the metropolitan lines will be effected ; and minor branches, such as the one proposed from Smithfield to the Regent's-circus, will merely help to feed the general centralisation at Finsbury-circus. These works, like all alterations and repairs, will give employment to many, and be a nuisance to others, as long as they are being constructed ; but when the mess is cleared up, and the new channels are thrown open, a sense of comfort and relief will be felt throughout the vast general traffic of London.

#### CHANGES.

In the depth of an ancient casement,  
Looking unto the west,  
A little maiden sat and read,  
In the evening's golden rest.

And her bright brain teemed with fancies  
Of spiritual things,  
Of breadths of silent, starry skies,  
Whitened with angels' wings.

And fields of blowing lilies,  
Radiant within the dawn,  
With the branches of the tree of life  
Shadowing field and lawn.

For the thin and tiny volume  
Was rich with fairy lore,  
And kindled her chiming fancies,  
As she turned the leaflets o'er,

Reading of knights and ladies,  
Who walked in the forests old,  
Bright as the morning planet  
Ere gathered to its fold ;

And the chamber walls grew lustreous,  
And the furnaced depths of fire,  
That flamed on the red horizon,  
Were filled with dome and spire,

And minarets, from out whose tops  
The bells of heaven blew  
Such harmonies and melodies  
That thrilled her through and through.

The dusk fell on the casement,  
The moonlight touched the chair,  
And she saw through the tender twilight  
The bats in the crimson air.

Plucking a scented leaflet  
From the vine beneath the eaves,  
She folded the wondrous volume,  
And placed it in the leaves.

The day looked through the casement,  
The evening fell more fair,  
And came and fled the dawn and dusk,  
But still she came not there.

The robin from the orchard  
Flew in upon the floor,  
And piped for his absent mistress,  
That never fed him more.

Her gentle soul was gathered  
Up through the midnight blue,  
As the glory of the sun exhausts  
The chalices of dew.

And friends who read the volume  
Beheld the withered leaf,  
And the quaint and child-like symbol hushed  
The utterance of grief.

For they, in faith, believed that fled  
This garden of tears and strife,  
The flower of her soul lay folded  
In the book of Endless Life.

## AMERICAN SNAKE STORIES.

I WAS in the Smithsonian Institution at Washington one torrid August afternoon. The Smithsonian Institution is a sort of young British Museum, or infant Louvre, and is situated in grounds of its own, not far from the banks of the beautiful river Potomac, up which Washington, cocked-hat, epaulettes, and all, has so often paddled in search of wild-ducks and "sheep's-head" fish. The Institution, though as promising an exhibition of the kind as any in the world, has, in common with many American show-places, a look of rawness and newness, which to an Englishman conveys a sense of provincialism and incompleteness. Yet it is this very feeling of repulsion which an Englishman in America is specially bound to overcome, for how can a new country resemble an old one? And why should it, since the new has other aims, and other possibilities, and youth is no more age than age is youth?

I had examined the exterior of the building, with its spurious Early English arches and windows, and its dark red stone that almost

looked like chocolate. A very spurious ponderous Castle of Otranto piece of Gothic it is, I must say. Indeed, Gothic does not thrive in America, and the audacious unmédiéval people of the States take much more kindly to Corinthian pillars of white marble, fine Palladian windows, and other anti-Ruskin enormities. But the Americans, remember, are a lightly taxed people; without a national debt to encourage their national industry; with no standing army to pay for, and with no distant colonies costing more than they bring in; so no wonder the Smithsonian Institution still shows signs of youth, and is still imperfect in many departments. The statuary consists of half a dozen casts, and a few engravings of Albert Durer, and two or three Ostades. But then the Japanese collection is superb, and the South American curiosities of matchless excellence.

I had stared at the Chinese plough, tied together with strips of cane, the shark's-teeth necklaces from the South Sea Islands, the Japanese silks, and the South American mummies, when I was "brought up," as the sailors say, by a glass-case that stood on the ledge of one of the windows, just by a huge gilt globe which a shaft of lightning had drilled with holes, rendering its admission into the "Smithsonian" necessary because it was of no use elsewhere.

I looked at the outside of the case; it was labelled

## PINE SNAKES FROM NEW JERSEY.

I looked inside; there they were, two of them, each about three fingers wide, coiled up, fold in fold. The dreadful pair, "fresh writhing from th' Erinnys' hair," with half-shut eyes and languid coil, seemed just commencing their winter's sleep. They regarded me with a listless and mild hatred, with small satanic bead-like eyes glancing askance. They had recently been casting their sloughs; a fragment of loose skin still hung upon the head of one of them. It was the corner piece by the mouth, which had been the last bit to change.

The box was composed of sheets of glass lapping over each other; the sides were of wood, and worked up and down in slides for the purpose of passing food to the snakes. For fear of accident, I suppose, those slides were now screwed down; for the American countryman at museums, or anywhere else, is an inquiring, irreverent, meddling being, and, sure as snakes are snakes, but, for this precaution, would have his hand in, to see if the "things were rale," two or three times every afternoon.

The snake has always played a great part in my nightmares; whether twining around a corpse head, as in Leonardo's picture at Florence; growing enormously big and maned, frightening whalers' boats' crews into fits as the sea serpent; nodding its head in cadence to the snake charmer's flute; or battling with Apollo as the Python in my early Greek exercises; or snapping at my legs in English coverts; or poisonous and spotted in bottles in the Hunterian Museum; or wrapped heavy and slimy between a Greenwich show-

man's blanket; still everywhere subtle, sudden in quarrel, treacherous, cruel, malignant, and deadly; still gliding, coiling, winding, springing, fanged and devilish; the type of evil, the favourite mask of Satan when he is bent on special mischief; the only animal that seems utterly opposed, and for ever antagonistic, to man; the only animal men instinctively shun, and at once, on seeing, prepare to do battle with to the death.

The sun fell strong and burning on the glass, yet they stirred not, but remained fixed in their torpor and lethargy. A strange infatuation seized me to twist out the screw and pass my hand into the box; I wanted to handle those little folds of striped black and white, to play the snake charmer, or enact Cleopatra's royal ending. I wanted to hold the wretches safely behind their little gills of ears, as in years gone by old Todhunter, the gamekeeper, taught me to handle a ferret, and then prize open those thin dark lines of mouths and examine the fangs, or rather the stings. For I still disdain all modern improvements, and violently refuse to believe that the serpent bites and does not sting; it is all very well to tell me that what frightened people used to take for the quivering sting was really the tongue, and of course perfectly harmless, but I know better; I want to touch and feel those horny black and white scales that lap the animal all over. They must feel like—Mercy of Heaven! now as I pass the thin corner of my cambric handkerchief through the join in the glass, there is actually a stealthy scarcely perceptible movement towards the place of one of the blunt shy heads! With horrible murderous quietude the other, too, now slowly drags out a fold from the scaly knot in which the two bodies were hitherto tied; now all the coils move in terrible unanimity; yet now again they remain like one monster with twin heads, apparently in unaroused torpidity and childlike trustfulness. How like many a villainous biped I have known and thus watched!

As I stood looking at those living servants of death, secured there in their crystal prison, two rough-looking countrymen from Wisconsin came up, and could scarcely conceal their disgust at finding that the snakes were not stuffed, but alive. Even when they moved, one of them said,

"I tell yer, Saul, it's all clockwork, so it is; I warn't raised in the nor'-west for nothing—no, sure!"

When I assured them that the man who put his hand in that case and scratched the head of either of those snakes would be a "gone coon" in the space of about half an hour, Saul got quite furious, and, spitting all over the Smithsonian Institution, with the greatest impartiality, swore "mighty he be bust up, and after that salted down for use among the niggers daown south, if he ever heard such a darned foolish thing as keeping two cussed snakes, like gentlemen, all in a glass case."

Not caring to argue with the nor'-wester, I sat down with him in one of the window re-

cesses, on the vertebra of a whale—a thing rather bigger than a man-of-war's binnacle—and proceeded to discuss snakes in general, and American "serpents" in particular.

They had both of them, Saul and Moses, often killed rattlesnakes, "any quantity of them," in the woods of Kentucky, whence they both came—but I had better give the matter, as nearly as I can, in their own language.

"Lor, stranger," said Moses, "I've killed a heap of snakes about the Green River—yes, sure; and on the Mississippi banks, yes, I guess, a few. I remember once when I was—yes—hunting bars one day in a cane-brake down at Green River, that some one saying something about snakes, put' the darned spiteful critters all at once in my mind, and I began to feel kinder scared, and my hat to kinder lift up off my head, as if my hair had turned to wire, for just then I heern an awful hissing, like an angry cat, and then the buzz of a rattle going so fast that it seemed to show double, like a tight string when you twang it backwards and forwards with your finger. Lor a mercy, what a leap I did make backwards!—seventeen feet if it was an inch—a caution to Blondin, I guess. Blue flugins, well my! if there warn't a snake coiled up under a hickory-tree, with its head up, its eye like a big diamond on fire, and its rattle tatting like castanets gone mad. Now, stranger, you must know the rattlesnake don't leap, like other snakes, and that's a kinder blessing to us 'Mericans, so I drew back another two feet or so, fired both barrels of my gun which happened to be loaded, slap into his coils, and then finished him with a 'stockdologer' from a sassafras bough—wopped him to pieces—fact—yes, sir. When I cut off his rattles, I found he had fifteen rows of 'em, and one of these, 'cute people say, comes every year, so that tarnation varmint must have been fifteen year going about the world doing mischief! Wonder how many Christians he had slaughtered!"

On further questioning Saul and Moses, I found that on opening this same rattlesnake's mouth, he had discovered a white slime, which he believed to be the poison, oozing through the hollow teeth, behind which the serpent carries his small pouches of portable death. The teeth, as he tried to explain to me, and as indeed I knew it already from actual examination, acted at once as lancets and injectors. They puncture a wound, and at the same instant that they punch two equidistant holes, project into them the poison. Providence, when it gave the bull its crescent horns, the stag its antlers, the bear its paws, and the tiger its teeth, gave the snake, in these hollow fangs, weapons of offence and of defence not less terrible.

The rattlesnake, Moses assured me, seldom, except perhaps when it had its young round it, pursued its enemy; always, if possible, stole away and avoided the combat; but, if trod on by the hunter, or driven into a corner whence it was impossible for it to escape, it instantly flew at the unlucky intruder.

Was there any cure for a rattlesnake bite? I had heard that eau de luce was thought a specific in India in cases of bites from the dreaded cobra, or hooded snake, of Hindostan.

"Wa'al," answered Moses, "I tell you what, mister; a bite from a rattlesnake is always 'a cawshun,' that's sure; but there is one thing that is good for it, if taken in time, and that's whisky."

Then Moses went on to tell me many instances of the efficacy of whisky; and indeed, while I was in America, I read in the Carolina and Virginia newspapers numerous cases in which whisky had proved a remedy in dangerous snake bites. Saul now came forward, and speaking up very nasally, but still like a man, told us a story of an old "niggur" on his father's plantation "dawn south," somewhere near Jackson's landing on the Mississippi, who had saved himself in this way after a bite. Directly after the fangs went in, he tied a handkerchief above the place (it was in his leg), and washed the punctures first with water and then with whisky: for already it began to swell and feel sore. He then drank off all the rest of the bottle till he was quite drunk—it always in these cases takes more whisky than usual to make a man drunk—and then staggered home. Next morning, he awoke with his leg swollen and sore, but otherwise as well as usual; and in a week or two he was quite recovered, and able to go about at cotton hoeing.

Moses backed up this narrative by assuring me that once, riding through a Kentucky forest, a rattlesnake bit a chestnut mare he was on, in the off-hind leg just above the pastern. He instantly got off, washed the wound with whisky, and poured a drench into the mare's mouth. She winced, kicked a little, and shuddered as if her blood were chilled, but next day she was all well again, and three weeks afterwards she won a trotting match at Nashville.

Saul here interposed, and snatching me out of the hand of Moses, drew my attention to the fact of the rattlesnake's being unable to leap like the puff-adder or the cotton-mouth. This rendered the rattlesnake much more harmless than it otherwise would have been.

This fact, indeed, rendered it easy to escape from a rattlesnake when you came suddenly upon it in a wood for instance, by a vigorous leap backward. A story is told in America relative to this. On one occasion, one of their generals (Jackson or Taylor) was bivouacking by night, during the old war, in a log hut which the troops had found in a lonely wood. The general and his suite had hardly well settled down to sleep, when a tremendous and multitudinous hissing showed them that a whole army of rattlesnakes was sheltering itself in the room below. Indeed, by the light of a blazing pine knot, they could look down between the gaping planks of the floor, and see the "serpents" coiling and hissing, like so many eels in the well of a punt. The suite instantly "made tracks," and cleared out to light a fire in the open air, or sleep round the fires the soldiers had already lighted. But the

general, calm and unshaken, well knowing the constitution of rattlesnakes and their manners, having ascertained that the floor he lay on was too far above them for the snakes to reach, and knowing they could not leap, lay down on the planks, and, though hissed to sleep, enjoyed one of the best nights' rest he obtained during the war.

I asked Moses about the cotton-mouth snake: having told him, in return for his information, a story about "the barber's-pole" of Jamaica—a snake striped alternately with black and vermillion—and also about a certain snake of South America, whose bite is so deadly, that no one was ever yet known to survive it.

Moses hereupon told me that the cotton-mouth was a snake very common in Carolina and elsewhere. It was remarkable for the fact of the inside of its mouth being covered with a white woolly filament resembling cotton. Its bite was peculiarly deadly. As to the whisky theory, the presumption amongst the planters who used the remedy was, that the virus of the snake exercised a certain chilling paralysing effect over the blood, which eventually, if unchecked, would retard the circulation so much as to produce death. The poison, too, appeared to have a dangerous local effect. There had been cases where persons recovering from snake bites had had the wounds turn into running sores, which had remained painful and unhealable for months.

I need not say that our agreeable conversation ended as all American conversations do end. Saul and Moses cut themselves fresh "plugs," put their hands in their pockets, and strolled off towards a cage of stuffed birds—among which the black and orange oriole was specially conspicuous—without bow, nod, or any other customary parting salutation. But I had learned to bear with these harmless things: if travelling does not teach one toleration, what will teach one?

It was some weeks before snakes crept again into my thoughts. This next time I was in the luxurious library of a New York magnate, in a house whose splendour literally blazed in comparison with the starved impoverished palaces of Genoa, Rome, or Venice. I was in the strippling world, as near the heart of civilisation as in England, and was with a man at whose bidding the winged messages to Paris or Peru and the Stock Exchange couriers flew "du Pérou jusqu'à Rome." There were bronzes on the buffet, and golden clocks to "tick off" Time's account; there were trophies of arms over the mantelpiece; and glowing in the midst, almost as if a lamp were shining behind it, hung a round buckler of rhinoceros horn from Central Nubia, transparent and luminously golden as though it were of amber.

My friend Mr. Vanderpump—for he was a Dutch merchant born in a quaint Spanish house in Amsterdam—turning, as he talked to me about snakes, lay in a long red and blue hammock made of aloe thread netted by an Indian of Guatemala, with one leg not ungracefully hanging over its

margin—Vanderpump, smoking one of those fiery Trichinopoly cheeroots which have ventilating straws inserted through their centres—harangued me pleasantly about certain deserted gold mines of the Spaniards, which it would take no great time, he said, by dint of Indian tradition, to rediscover; from this subject he wandered on, by many pleasant devious by-paths of converse, to the subject of certain snakes of enormous size supposed to exist in "tarns" or small lakes among a certain range of mountains in South America.

I roused up at this and prepared to listen. Vanderpump then—rolling round in his hammock, which, stretching from either wall, drooped down and swung within two or three feet of the ground—drew several yards of the coloured netting over him as if for warmth, and prepared to pour out upon me his "winged words."

He told me that many Indians and hunters had assured him that they had seen these enormous snakes. They were twice as large as boa constrictors, and were generally discerned bathing themselves in the mountain lakes, where it was supposed they came to feed on the fish. They had, however, never yet been killed or found dead, nor was it known on what they usually fed, or where they lived. He (Vanderpump) being a liberal in science as in politics, saw no reason to doubt that a few specimens of some extinct Pythonic race of serpents might still be existing among those rarely trodden mountains. Races of animals had died out of particular countries in our own time. The dodo was an instance. Even in the sea-serpent many sensible people retained belief.

If the bon constrictor that can battle with a buffalo or an alligator, and swallow a deer, antlers and all, were to become extinct to-day; to-morrow, but for printed records, there would be people found to deny that such a monster had ever existed. Because a certain creature had not yet been classified by stay-at-home zoologists, that was no proof, he urged, it did not exist. The mammoth was wonderful, and its skeleton had been found; whereas the backbone of a large snake presents little resistance to the violent extremes of South American climate.

I asked Vanderpump, who I knew had dabbled in medicine, whether, in the course of his South American travels, he had tried to discover new and valuable drugs, and, above all, any specific for snake bites?

He said, oscillating himself with lazy grandeur, that he had; he had several times in Nicaragua and Guatemala been on the brink of great discoveries. He had once been presented with a herb, which the peons told him was a certain cure for small-pox, but he tried it on one of his own Spanish servants who was ill, and it proved useless. The plant seemed a remedy, only to the Indian constitution and in the Indian climate. There was, however, one pulverised herb which the peons used as snuff in cases of low fever, by which he had himself been cured when dangerously ill. Yet he had tried in vain

to obtain a specimen of it; all offers of money were refused. They would not even gather it, except at night, for fear of being seen.

"And why all this precaution, this dog-in-the-manger caution?"

Because the Indians said that when the white man used one of their medicines it lost all its virtue. It had been so with jalap and with Peruvian bark. They were therefore determined to keep this wonderful diaphoretic and sudatory to themselves. He dried leaves of every herb and tree he could find in the neighbourhood, yet in vain. In all his searches he never discovered a specific against snake bites. On the contrary, so much was a certain sort of snake dreaded there, that, if one was killed, all the people of the neighbourhood would go out and solemnly burn the body to ashes, for fear of any life being left in it.

Vanderpump then went on to tell me of his having been once bitten, on the bank of a river, by a snake that had crept into an eel-hole. But this bite ended with a mere slight inflammation, and he supposed that the virus must have been neutralised by the water; or, more likely, the aggressive snake was a harmless one.

I had not many snake stories of my own experience to exchange with Vanderpump in return; but what I had, I told without brodery or lace-work of imagination. I described how an eccentric friend of mine, first an officer, then a clergyman, and a conscientious man in both capacities, with whom I spent several pleasant summers, used to delight in taming the harmless snakes, common in English hedge-rows. He kept them by day in his pocket or hat, by night in a bandbox in the room I slept in; and well I remember the tremendous round and round scramble one morning, when one of them swallowed whole, a large frog, which had been shut up with him for his consumption.

From this, I harmlessly episoded into an account of a pretty peasant girl in Normandy whom I had seen twine live lizards lightly between the heavy lustrous black folds of her tiara of hair, where they glowed like coils of living emerald. I then (just as coffee came up like so much smoking incense) asked Vanderpump if it was really true that travelling quacks in America made a living by killing rattlesnakes for their fat?

He said it was indeed; that snake fat was excellent for sprains and bruises, and had been used in such cases, for centuries, by the Indians.

It was some days after I parted from Vanderpump, and I was on the Mississippi, on the hurricane-deck of a first-class racing steamer; my feet were on planks covered with leaf lead to prevent the wood sparks charring them. Above us and behind us, rose the glazed tower of a pilot-house. I was seated on an arm-chair, side by side with my dear friend Captain Vaughan, skipper of a Californian steamer. From this "eagin of vantage" we looked down on the brown turbid river, on the pelicans, and on the brown sand-bars.

The crumbling banks of the great river were mere wrecks of fallen cotton-trees, and here and

there were visible the white huts of the "negro quarter" of a cotton plantation. On the long spit of the nearest sand-bar, lay a putrid lump which had once been a bullock, and, tumbling over and fighting for it, were swarming masses of turkey buzzards.

Again our converse fell on snakes. Apropos of some remarks on the great floods which are almost periodical on this great fickle river, the captain, bending his astute yet kindly eyes on me, told me how once, during one of those great inundations that reach for miles, when all the stream was alive with drifts of broken steam-boats, fallen trees, cotton bales, and here and there dead men, he was in a steam-boat at Napoleon, at the mouth of the Arkansas river, when a backwoodsman came on board with a huge dead rattlesnake twisted round him. He had found it, he told the marvelling passengers, floating on a black locust-tree which the river had undermined and washed down from its banks. These floods, said Vaughan, destroy a great many snakes, and the snakes have a great dread of the floods.

The captain then went on to describe, when a prairie is on fire, the terror, anguish, and fury of the snakes. Some hunters even said that at those times they bit themselves and so died before the fire could reach them. They seemed thoroughly conscious of the danger. But this story of their suicide the captain doubted, because he had himself once caught a very large rattlesnake, taken it home, and tied it to a suspended washing cord, where it could hiss and move but do no harm, for he had slipped a piece of stick into its mouth and tied it like a bit, with a string behind its head. There he fed and kept it for some days; but the snake, even when it had its head free, never attempted to bite itself. As to the popular notion that in times of danger the mother snake opened its mouth and let the young ones run down into its stomach for shelter, he believed that it merely originated in finding live snakes in the stomachs of others, which had, perhaps, swallowed them for food.

I then inquired of the captain if he had ever used eau de luce for snake bites, and if he knew what it was? He said, smiling, that eau de luce was a mere quack name for compound tincture of ammonia, and that, undoubtedly, it was a good thing; but he had known an old slave suck the bites with great success, and with perfect impunity to himself.

I asked the captain if snakes were gregarious? The captain—after pointing to an alligator which was just floating past, looking as like a dead tree as a thing well could—went on to say that though not generally gregarious, he thought several often selected the same places to hibernate: as he himself had once found more than a score under a felled live oak-tree he had to move with a gang of lumberers. He chopped them up with his axe as small as mincemeat in no time, he could tell me! He had also a story of a narrow escape he had had in the lower range of the Rocky Mountains. Here the captain pulled out his pocket-

book and showed me a plan of the place which he had made at the time, as that part of the range had never before been trodden by white man. I put the story in the first person, and try to give it the effect of the captain's manner.

"I had been," he said, "prospecting all day for minerals, and had found some copper and lead, and some curious sulphur springs of, I believe, a unique kind; and, coming back to my camp, had lit my fire, and cooked some deer meat; then, quite tired out, looked round to select a convenient and sheltered place on which to sleep. I chose out, at last, a place under a high crumbly-looking rock not far from my fire, and, loading my rifle, first bandaging the lock and slipping it into my mackintosh-case to guard it from the damp, I wrapped myself like a mummy in my Mackinaw blanket and laid down under the rock to sleep: intending to rise early and push fast, to overtake my men, who were a day's march ahead looking after bears.

"I had a bad night, for rats or something or other kept passing over me and half waking me. About the grey of the morning, I rouse'd myself from that sort of torpid paralysed sense of endurance that a prolonged nightmare throws you in, and rose up on my elbow to see if my logs were quite burnt out, or if there was, perhaps, enough fire left to warm me some coffee, for the night had been frosty and cold. I looked, and to my horror saw a writhing heap of about thirty rattlesnakes coiled or moving round the brands of my fire. I had been sleeping under a rock which was perforated by their holes, and my fire had drawn them out by its alluring warmth. It was these snakes I had felt moving over me in my long nightmare.

"Loramussy, mister! How quick I did get on my feet, sure; and as I ran off, I banged with my rifle right among them, just to give them a sort of parting blessing. But what harm I did to them I never knew, for I did not care much to go back to that hive of rattlesnakes."

Thanking the captain for his story, I reminded him that, in the prairies, rattlesnakes became gregarious from their habit of occupying the holes of the prairie dogs: first eating their landlords—a most ungenerous return for the shelter afforded them.

The captain said that deer were very much afraid of the rattlesnakes; but that sometimes an old buck would face them, and leaping on them, crush them by a succession of bounds and jumps. Dogs, too, would sometimes face them, and acquire a habit of seizing them at the back of the head; but, if once bitten, the dogs lost all courage afterwards.

The very same week of this conversation with the captain, in perusing the Memphis Daily Avalanche, I met with two singular snake stories, and as my chapter is necessarily a mere string of beads, and the stories are too good to "whistle down the wind," I will tell them here. The first had reference to a shrewd Yankee smuggler, who, having lately to pass some prohibited article into Canada, prepared a large

box pierced with holes, and divided in two horizontally by a movable tray. Below the tray he placed his tabooed goods, above he coiled a lively rattlesnake, then he locked and corded the whole, and took it boldly to the frontier custom-house.

"Anything to declare? Any tobacco?" said the custom-house.

"No," said the Yankee, "only 'notions.'"

"Open the box," said the custom-house.

The Yankee handed the key.

Custom-house opened it with mechanical quickness, and, starting back with a roar at seeing the lifted mischievous hissing head of the snake, clapped down the lid again and slammed it with a click. There was no more examination of that box at the custom-house.

The second story was more singular, and of undoubted truth, for I verified it. It was a short story of Southern jealousy. One day last June, a smartly dressed mulatto woman came to the Charleston post-office, and asked if there were any letters from New Orleans for "Mrs. Delia White." The postmaster, looking through the grating, and then pausing to finish "a brandy smash," as it was only "a coloured pussin," proceeded to slowly turn and shuffle, a pack of New Orleans letters. Apparently without success, for he shook his head and proceeded to nib his pen.

"Mrs. Delia White?" suddenly said the second clerk, rising from some trifling with a basin of "gumbo soup," for it was luncheon time; "why, that's the small parcel put up there on the top shelf, because it was marked *with care*. Care about coloured persons' things! What next?" And here the energetic official relapsed into his national soup.

Mrs. Delia retired to the post-office window to open the present from her husband. The coral necklace, the earrings, the what not!

"O Jerusalem!"

That piercing shriek was from Mrs. Delia, as she tore open the large yellow envelope stamped with Washington's head stamps, and found a lively little puff-adder, which fell from her hands hissing and wriggling on the marble floor!

The little mischievous snake was instantly killed by the alarmed clerks, excitable and easily roused as Southerners usually are; and in gratitude Mrs. Delia showed the handsomer clerk of the two, her jealous husband's billet-doux. It might have been written with poison, so cruelly malicious were its contents. It ran thus:

"**MY DEAREST DELIA,**—The husband you have forgotten sends you a dear nice little present from New Orleans. Take it, Dody, and kiss it for my sake."

Snake worship takes us back to the python, and to the snakes that Mercury twined round his caduceus, to the snake that sipped at Hygea's bowl, and to the monsters that offended Neptune, sent to slay Laocoön and his children. It leads us on by the Samothracian mysteries to Siva worship, and to the snakes that the blood-stained Doorga of

Hindostan, brandishes in her thousand hands. It bears us among the Northern snows, to the great serpent of the Norse mythology that girdles round the world, and which Thor baiting his hook with a bull's head once went out fishing for. It carries us to the Druids and their snake stone amulets, and then away through countless oak woods, through whose boughs the golden sickle gleams; to sandy Egypt, where the snake figures again on the diadems of their ancient kings, and as the emblem of eternity upon the solemn tombs and temples. It is not for me here to sum up German theories, and decide who first of the race of Cain introduced the serpent as the special emblem of evil, and the peculiar object of honour in the obscene rites of Devil worship. It is not for me to discuss whether the serpent was selected by the sons of Cain in open defiance of the Deity, or because the snake had been selected by Satan as his most favourite disguise; or, whether it was merely preferred as a general type of death and evil, as more malignant, wily, and "subtle than any beast of the field;" for the same reason as sacrifices of blood and fire were offered, as indicating the dreadful attributes of the Prince of the powers of the air. Yet, I can never find it in my heart to rail at the devil worshippers—as wilful worshippers of the bad—but rather consider them as timid savages who, seeing a terrible force of evil and death storming around them, fell to deprecating the wrath of their great evil principle.

Now, all this is à propos of the fact that snake worship is still common in Hindostan and all through Africa; will it startle our readers to hear that it still prevails here and there among the American negroes, especially among those who have retained most of their African habits, and among the more recent arrivals in the slave steamers?

A remarkable instance of this occurred while I was staying at New Orleans. That luxurious city, so festive and riotous in the winter; so deserted by all but slaves, death, and the yellow fever, in summer; is a great dépôt for negroes. Here, stealing up the Mississippi at night, come the steam slavers to unload their cargoes of blacks in some wooded creek, intending thence to pass them stealthily into the interior. To New Orleans, stowed away in one way and another, come in perpetually negroes from Cuba. Here at the slave marts—boldly announced on signboards—you see all day moping men and women looking through the barred glass doors. This is the city where poisons can be bought from mysterious old negro women living in the Bayous; and where jealous Creoles, quarrelling with their paramours, can purchase the power of killing them in a week, two months, or a year, so subtle are these revengeful people in the art of poisoning.

It was in this city of strange contrasts, while I was there, that some mischief was suspected by the police to be brewing among the free negro population, in the black quarter. The police, armed as usual with revolver and cutlass, at a cer-

tain hour of the night closed in upon a house particularly suspected. Seeing unusual light, and hearing many voices, they at once broke in, and found a band of old negresses scantily clothed and engaged in the idolatrous Voodoo ceremonies, dancing and chanting round a caldron in which a rattlesnake was boiling. The ring-leaders were arrested and taken off to the ca-boose, and were condemned eventually to various durations of imprisonment.

It startled me, in this nineteenth century which we brag about so much, in the great capital of the south, in the midst of the New World's vigorous and never resting civilisation, to hear of a band of snake and devil worshippers being arrested and sent to prison for the almost open celebration of such rites.

### DRIFT.

#### KING HENRY THE FIFTH'S SPOONS.

"KILL the ploys and the luggage," says our friend Fluellen, in the play; "'tis expressly against the law of arms: 'tis as arrant a piece of knavery, mark you now, as can be offered." Of course the worthy Welsh gentleman is quite justified by the historical account of the attack by French freebooters on the camp and baggage of King Henry the Fifth at the battle of Agincourt. An eye-witness of that great fight, one of the army chaplains, of whose name we are not adequately informed, writes, that "the king ordered the baggage of the army to the rear of the battle, for fear it should fall into the enemy's hands, it having been placed, together with the priests who were about to officiate and pray earnestly for the king and his men, in the villages and closes, with directions to wait till the end of the battle; for the French plunderers had already, on every side, their eyes upon it, with an intention of attacking it as soon as they saw both armies engage; and upon the rear of which, where by the inactivity of the vassals the baggage of the king was, they did fall as soon as the battle began, carrying off the royal treasures, the sword and crown, with other jewels, and all the household stuff." Some of the jewels were recovered, with much difficulty, but Sir H. Nicols notices the description of the plate lost on this occasion, which evidently belonged to the king, and was carried to France for his own personal use. The articles are mentioned in an acquaintance from the king to his treasurer and others, for the objects entrusted to their custody, but lost at the battle:

A salt-cellar of gold, enamelled with links and collars.

A long serpentine (a precious stone), weighing 2 lb. 3 oz., troy weight, valued at 16*l.* a pound—4*l*. 13*s.* 4*d.*

Thirteen spoons of white silver, marked with a small crown, weighing, according to the same weight, 1 lb. 3*½* oz., which, at 30*s.* the pound and at 2*s.* 6*d.* an ounce, is 38*s.* 9*d.*

Three salt-cellars of silver gilt with covers, with the tops in the form of bells, marked with swans enamelled, weighing 7 lb. 7 oz., at 60*s.* a pound and 5*s.* the ounce, is 22*l.* 15*s.*

A spoon of white silver, marked with a small crown, weighing one ounce, value 2*s.* 6*d.*

A spoon of gold, not marked, weighing 2 oz. 7 pennyweights, 1 ob., value at 26*s.* 8*d.* an ounce and 16*d.* the pennyweight, is 63*s.* 4*d.*

Six spoons of white silver, not marked, weighing 6*½* oz., at 2*s.* 6*d.* an ounce—15*s.* 17*½**d.*

Seven spoons of white silver, not marked, weighing 6*¾* oz. at 2*s.* 6*d.* an ounce—16*s.* 10*½**d.*

A salt-cellar of gold, of morask (mauresque) work, garnished with two amethysts, with a Scotch pebble on the top, and with many little garnets red and green, value 10*l.* in money.

Among these valuables, it will be observed that there is no mention made of forks; and this circumstance will help to support Mr. H. Turner's assertion, "that the fingers and knives of folks served for many centuries after the thirteenth century to enable them to eat their several meals; and that spoons were common enough, and must have often served in place of forks." Moreover, in the inventory of goods, chattels, jewels, and personal effects of the same monarch, prepared by the executors of his will, there is mention made of only four forks, among dozens upon dozens of spoons and knives.

#### A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

##### CHAPTER XXXV.

"WELL, what next? have you bethought you of anything more to charge me with?" cried a large full man, whose angry look and manner showed how he resented these cheatings.

I staggered back sick and faint, for the individual before me was Crofton, my kind host of long ago in Ireland, and from whose hospitable roof I had taken such an unceremonious departure.

"Who are you?" cried he, again. "I had hoped to have paid everything and everybody. Who are you?"

Wishing to retire unrecognised, I stammered out something very unintelligibly indeed about my gratitude, and my hope for a pleasant journey to him, retreating all the while towards the door.

"It's all very well to wish the traveller a pleasant journey," said he, "but you innkeepers ought to bear in mind that no man's journey is rendered more agreeable by robbery. This house is somewhat dearer than the Clarendon in London, or the Hôtel du Rhin at Paris. Now, there might be perhaps some pretext to make a man pay smartly who travels post, and has two or three servants with him, but what excuse can you make for charging some poor devil of a foot traveller, taking his humble meal in the common room, and, naturally enough, of the commonest fare, for making him pay eight florins—eight florins and some kreutzers—for his dinner? Why, our dinner here for two people was handsomely paid at six florins ahead, and yet you bring in a bill of eight florins against that poor wretch."

I saw now, that, what between the blinding effects of his indignation, and certain changes which time and the road had worked in my appearance, it was more than probable I should

escape undetected, and so I affected to busy myself with some articles of his luggage that lay scattered about the room until I could manage to slip away.

"Touch nothing, my good fellow!" cried he, angrily; "send my own people here for these things. Let my courier come here—or my valet."

This was too good an opportunity to be thrown away, and I made at once for the door, but at the same instant it was opened, and Mary Crofton stood before me. One glance showed me that I was discovered, and there I stood, speechless with shame and confusion. Rallying, however, after a moment, I whispered, "Don't betray me," and tried to pass out. Instead of minding my entreaty, she set her back to the door, and laughingly cried out to her brother,

"Don't you know whom we have got here?"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed he.

"Cannot you recognise an old friend, notwithstanding all his efforts to cut us?"

"Why—what—surely it can't be—it's not possible—eh?" And by this time he had wheeled me round to the strong light of the window, and then, with a loud burst, he cried out, "Potts, by all that's ragged! Potts himself! Why, old fellow, what could you mean by wanting to escape us?" and he wrung my hand with a cordial shake that at once brought the blood back to my heart, while his sister completed my happiness by saying,

"If you only knew all the schemes we have planned to catch you, you would certainly not have tried to avoid us."

I made an effort to say something—anything, in short—but not a word would come. If I was overjoyed at the warmth of their greeting, I was no less overwhelmed with shame; and there I stood, looking very pitifully from one to the other, and almost wishing that I might faint outright, and so finish my misery.

With a woman's fine tact, Mary Crofton seemed to read the meaning of my suffering, and, whispering one word in her brother's ear, she slipped away and left us alone together.

"Come," said he good naturally, as he drew his arm inside mine, and led me up and down the room, "tell me all about it. How have you come here? What are you doing?"

I have not the faintest recollection of what I said. I know that I endeavoured to take up my story from the day I had last seen him, but it must have proved a very strange and bungling narrative, from the questions which he was forced occasionally to put, in order to follow me out.

"Well," said he, at last, "I will own to you that, after your abrupt departure, I was sorely puzzled what to make of you, and I might have remained longer in the same state of doubt, when a chance visit that I made to Dublin led me to Dycer's, and there, by a mere accident, I heard of you—heard who you were, and where your father lived. I went at once and called upon him, my object being to learn if he had any tidings of you, and where you then were. I found him no better informed than myself. He showed me a few lines you had written on

the morning you left home, stating that you would probably be absent some days, and might be even weeks, but that since that date nothing had been heard of you. He seemed vexed and displeased, but not uneasy or apprehensive about your absence, and the same tone I observed in your college tutor, Doctor Tobin. He said: 'Potts will come back, sir, one of these days, and not a whit wiser than he went. His self-esteem is to his capacity, in the reduplicate ratio of the inverse proportion of his ability, and he will be always a fool.' I wrote to various friends of ours travelling about the world, but none had met with you; and at last, when about to come abroad myself, I called again on your father, and found him just re-married."

"Re-married!"

"Yes! he was lonely, he said, and wanted companionship, and so on; and all I could obtain from him was a note for a hundred pounds, and a promise that, if you came back within the year, you should share the business of his shop with him."

"Never! never!" said I. "Potts may be the fool they deem him, but there are instincts and promptings in his secret heart that they know nothing of. I will never go back. Go on."

"I now come to my own story. I left Ireland a day or two after and came to England, where business detained me some weeks. My uncle had died and left me his heir—not, indeed, so rich as I had expected, but very well off for a man who had passed his life on very moderate means. There were a few legacies to be paid, and one which he especially entrusted to me by a secret paper, in the hope that, by delicate and judicious management, I might be able to persuade the person in whose interest it was bequeathed to accept. It was, indeed, a task of no common difficulty, the legatee being the widow of a man who had, by my uncle's cruelty, been driven to destroy himself. It is a long story, which I cannot now enter upon; enough that I say it had been a trial of strength between two very vindictive unyielding men which should crush the other, and my uncle being the richer—and not from any other reason—conquered.

"The victory was a very barren one. It embittered every hour of his life after, and the only reparation in his power he attempted on his death-bed, which was to settle an annuity on the family of the man he had ruined. I found out at once where they lived, and set about effecting this delicate charge. I will not linger over my failure—but it was complete. The family was in actual distress, but nothing would induce them to listen to the project of assistance; and, in fact, their indignation compelled me to retire from the attempt in despair. My sister did her utmost in the cause, but equally in vain, and we prepared to leave the place, much depressed and cast down by our failure. It was on the last evening of our stay at the inn of the little village, a townsman of the place, whom I had employed to aid my attempt by his personal influence with the family, asked to see me and speak with me in private.

"He appeared to labour under considerable agitation, and opened our interview by bespeaking my secrecy as to what he was about to communicate. It was to this purport: A friend of his own, engaged in the Baltic trade, had just declared to him that he had seen W., the person I allude to, alive and well, walking on the quay at Riga, that he traced him to his lodging, but, on inquiring for him the next day, he was not to be found, and it was then ascertained that he had left the city. W. was, it would seem, a man easily recognised, and the other declared that there could not be the slightest doubt of his identity. The question was a grave one how to act, since the assurance company with which his life was insured were actually engaged in discussing the propriety of some compromise by paying to the family a moiety of the policy, and a variety of points arose out of this contingency; for while it would have been a great cruelty to have conveyed hopes to the family that might, by possibility, not be realised, yet, on the other hand, to have induced them to adopt a course on the hypothesis of his death when they believed him still living, was almost as bad.

"I thought for a long while over the matter, and with my sister's counsel to aid me, I determined that we should come abroad and seek out this man, trusting that, if we found him, we could induce him to accept of the legacy which his family rejected. We obtained every clue we could think of to his detection. A perfect description of him, in voice, look, and manner; a copy of his portrait, and a specimen of his handwriting; and then we bethought ourselves of interesting you in the search. You were rambling about the world in that idle and desultory way in which any sort of a pursuit might be a boon—as often in the by-paths as on the high roads—you might chance to hit off this discovery in some remote spot, or, at all events, find some clue to it. In a word, we grew to believe that, with you to aid us, we should get to the bottom of this mystery; and now that by a lucky chance we have met you, our hopes are all the stronger."

"You'll think it strange," said I, "but I already know something of this story; the man you allude to was Sir Samuel Whalley."

"How on earth have you guessed that?"

"I came by the knowledge on a railroad journey, where my fellow-passengers talked over the event, and I subsequently travelled with Sir Samuel's daughter, who came abroad to fill the station of a companion to an elderly lady. She called herself Miss Herbert."

"Exactly! The widow resumed her family name after W.'s suicide—if it were a suicide."

"How singular to think that you should have chanced upon this link of the chain. And do you know her?"

"Intimately; we were fellow-travellers for some days."

"And where is she now?"

"She is, at this moment, at a villa on the Lake of Como, living with a Mrs. Keats, the sister of her Majesty's Envoy at Kalbbratenstadt."

"You are marvellously accurate in this narrative, Potts," said he, laughing; "the impression made on you by this young lady can scarcely have been a transient one."

I suppose I grew very red—I felt that I was much confused by this remark—and I turned away to conceal my emotion. Crofton was too delicate to take any advantage of my distress, and merely added:

"From having known her, you will naturally devote yourself with more ardour to serve her. May we then count upon your assistance in our project?"

"That you may," said I. "From this hour, I devote myself to it."

Crofton at once proposed that I should order my luggage to be placed on his carriage, and start off with them; but I firmly opposed this plan. First of all, I had no luggage, and had no fancy to confess as much; secondly, I resolved to give at least one day for Vaterchen's arrival—I'd have given a month rather than come down to the dreary thought of his being a knave, and Tintefleck a cheat! In fact, I felt that if I were to begin any new project in life with so black an experience, that every step I took would be marked with distrust, and tarnished with suspicion. I therefore pretended to Crofton that I had given rendezvous to a friend at Lindau, and could not leave without waiting for him. I am not very sure that he believed me, but he was most careful in not dropping a word that might show incredulity; and once more we addressed ourselves to the grand project before us.

"Come in, Mary!" cried he, suddenly rising from his chair, and going to meet her. "Come in, and help us by your good counsel."

It was not possible to receive me with more kindness than she showed. Had I been some old friend who came to meet them there by appointment, her manner could not have been more courteous nor more easy; and when she learned from her brother how warmly I had associated myself in this plan, she gave me one of her pleasantest smiles, and said:

"I was not mistaken in you."

With a great map of Europe before us on the table, we proceeded to plan a future line of operations. We agreed to take certain places, each of us, and to meet at certain others, to compare notes and report progress. We scarcely permitted ourselves to feel any great confidence of success, but we all concurred in the notion that some lucky hazard might do for us more than all our best-devised schemes could accomplish; and, at last, it was settled that, while they took Southern Germany and the Tyrol, I should ramble about through Savoy and Upper Italy, and our meeting-place be in Italy. The great railway centres, where Englishmen of every class and gradation were much employed, offered the best prospect of meeting with the object of our search, and these were precisely the sort of places such a man would be certain to resort to.

Our discussion lasted so long, that the Croftons put off their journey till the following day, and we dined all together very happily,

never wearied of talking over the plan before us, and each speculating as to what share of acuteness he could contribute to the common stock of investigation. It was when Crofton left the room to search for the portrait of Whalley, that Mary sat down at my side, and said :

" I have been thinking for some time over a project in which you can aid me greatly. My brother tells me that you are known to Miss Herbert. Now, I want to write to her; I want to tell her that there is one who, belonging to a family from which hers has suffered heavily, desires to expiate so far, maybe, the great wrong, and, if she will permit it, to be her friend. While I can in a letter explain what I feel on this score, I am well aware how much aid it would afford me to have the personal corroboration of one who could say, ' She who writes this is not altogether unworthy of your affection; do not reject the offer she makes you, or, at least, reflect and think over it before you refuse it.' Will you help me so far? "

My heart bounded with delight as I first listened to her plan; it was only a moment before, that I remembered how difficult, if not impossible, it would be for me to approach Miss Herbert once more. How or in what character could I seek her? To appear before her in any feigned part would be, under the circumstances, ignoble and unworthy, and yet, was I, out of any merely personal consideration, any regard for the poor creature Potts, to forego the interests, mayhap the whole happiness, of one so immeasurably better and worthier? Would not any amount of shame and exposure to myself be a cheap price for even a small quantity of benefit bestowed on *her*? What signified it that I was poor and ragged—unknown, unrecognised—if *she* were to be the gainer? Would not, in fact, the very sacrifice of self in the affair be ennobling and elevating to me, and would I not stand better in my own esteem for this one honest act, than I had ever done after any mock success or imaginary victory?

" I think I can guess why you hesitate," cried she; " you fear that I will say something indiscreet—something that would compromise you with Miss Herbert—but you need not dread that; and, at all events, you shall read my letter."

" Far from it," said I; " my hesitation had a very different source. I was solely thinking whether, if you were aware of how I stood in my relations to Miss Herbert, you would have selected me as your advocate; and though it may pain me to make a full confession, you shall hear everything."

With this I told her all—all, from my first hour of meeting her at the railway station, to my last parting with her at Schaffhausen. I tried to make my narrative as grave and commonplace as might be, but, do what I would, the figure in which I was forced to present myself overcame all her attempts at seriousness, and she laughed immoderately. If it had not been for this burst of merriment on her part, it is more than probable I might have brought down my history to the very moment of telling, and

narrated every detail of my journey with Vaterchen and Tintefleck. I was, however, warned by these circumstances, and concluded in time to save myself from this new ridicule.

" From all that you have told me here," said she, " I only see one thing—which is, that you are deeply in love with this young lady."

" No," said I; " I was so once, I am not so any longer. My passion has fallen into the chronic stage, and I feel myself her friend—only her friend."

" Well, for the purpose I have in mind, this is all the better. I want you, as I said, to place my letter in her hands, and so far as possible, enforce its arguments—that is, try and persuade her that to reject our offers on her behalf is to throw upon us a share of the great wrong our uncle worked, and make us, as it were, participants in the evil he did them. As for myself," said she, boldly, " all the happiness that I might have derived from ample means is dashed with remembering what misery it has been attended with to that poor family. If you urge that one theme forcibly, you can scarcely fail with her."

" And what are your intentions with regard to her?" asked I.

" They will take any shape she pleases. My brother would either enable her to return home, and, by persuading her mother to accept an annuity, live happily under her own roof; or she might—if the idea of independence fires her—she might yet use her influence over her mother and sister to regard our proposals more favourably; or she might come and live with us, and this I would prefer to all; but you must read my letter, and more than once, too. You must possess yourself of all its details, and, if there be anything to which you object, there will be time enough still to change it."

" Here he is—here is the portrait of our lost sheep," said Crofton, now entering with a miniature in his hand. It represented a bluff, bold, almost insolently bold man in full civic robes, the face not improbably catching an additional expression of vulgar pride from the fact that the likeness was taken in that culminating hour of greatness when he first took the chair as chief magistrate of his town.

" Not an over-pleasant sort of fellow to deal with, I should say," remarked Crofton. " There are some stern lines here about the corners of the eyes, and certain very suspicious-looking indentations next the mouth."

" His eye has no forgiveness in it," said his sister.

" Well, one thing is clear enough, he ought to be easily recognised; that broad forehead, and those wide-spread nostrils and deeply divided chin, are very striking marks to guide one.—I cannot give you this," said Crofton to me, " but I'll take care to send you an accurate copy of it at the first favourable moment; meanwhile, make yourself master of its details, and try if you cannot carry the resemblance in your memory."

" Disabuse yourself, too," said she, laughing,

"of all this accessory grandeur, and bear in mind that you'll not find him dressed in ermine, or surrounded with a collar and badge. Not very like his daughter, I'm sure," whispered she in my ear, as I continued to gaze steadfastly at the portrait. "Can you trace any likeness?"

"Not the very faintest; she is beautiful," said I, "and her whole expression is gentleness and delicacy."

"Well, certainly," said Crofton, shutting up the miniature, "these are not the distinguishing traits of our friend here, whom I should call a hard-natured, stern, obstinate fellow, with great self-reliance, and no great trust of others."

"I was just thinking," said I, "that were I to come up with such a man as this, what chance would my poor, frail, yielding temperament have in influencing the rugged granite of his nature? He'd terrify me at once."

"Not when your object was a good and generous one," said Miss Crofton. "You might well enough be afraid to confront such a man as this if your aim was to overreach and deceive him; but bear in mind the fable of the man who had the courage to take the thorn out of the lion's paw. The operation, we are told, was a painful one, and there might have been an instant in which the patient felt disposed to eat his doctor; but, with all these perils, strong in a good purpose, the surgeon persevered, and by his skill and his courage made the king of the beasts his fast friend for life. The lesson is worth remembering."

I was still pondering over this apophthegm, when Crofton aroused me by pushing across the table a great heap of gold. "This is all yours, Potts," said he; "and remember, that as you are now my agent, travelling for the house of Crofton and Co., that you journey at *my* cost."

Of course I would not listen to this proposal, and although urged by Miss Crofton with all a woman's tact and delicacy, I persisted so firmly in my refusal, that they were obliged to yield. I now had a hundred pounds all my own, and though the sum be not a very splendid one, I remember some French writer—I'm not sure it is not Jules Janin—saying, "Any man who can put his hand into his pocket and find five Napoleons there, is rich;" and he certainly supports his theory with considerable sophistry and cleverness, mainly depending on the assumption, that any of the reasonable daily necessities of life, even in a luxurious point of view, are attainable with such means. Now, although a hundred pounds would not very long supply resources for such a life, yet, as I am not a Frenchman, nor living in Paris, still less had I habits or tastes of a costly kind, I might very well eke out three months pleasantly on this sum, and in these three months what might not happen? In a "hundred days," the great Napoleon crushed the whole might of the Austrian empire, and secured an emperor's daughter for his bride; and in another "hundred days"

he made the tour of France, from Cannes to Rochefort, and lost an empire by the way! Wonderful things might then be compassed within three months.

"What are you saying about three months, Potts?" asked Crofton, for unwittingly I had uttered these words aloud.

"I was observing," said I, "that in three months from this day, we should arrange to meet somewhere. Where shall we say?"

"Geneva is very central; shall we name Geneva?"

"Oh, on no account. Let our rendezvous be in Italy. Let us say Rome."

"Rome be it, then," cried Crofton. "Now for another point: let us have a wager as to who first discovers the object of our search. I'll bet you twenty Napoleons, Potts, to ten—for, as we are two to one, so should the wager be."

"I take you," cried I, entering into his humour, "and I feel as certain of success as if I had your money in my hand."

"Will you have another wager with me?" whispered Mary Crofton, as she came behind my chair. "It is, that you'll not persuade Miss Herbert to wear this ring for *my* sake."

"I'll bet my life on it," said I, taking the opal ring she drew from her finger, as she spoke; "I'm in that mood of confidence now, I feel there is nothing I could not promise."

"If so then, Potts, let me have the benefit of this fortunate interval, and ask you to promise me one thing, which is, not to change your mind more than twice a day; don't be angry with me, but hear me out. You are a good-hearted fellow, and have excellent intentions; I don't think I know one less really selfish, but at the same time you are so fickle of purpose, so undecided in action, that I'd not be the least astonished to hear, when we asked for you to-morrow at breakfast-time, that you had started for a tour in Norway, or on a voyage to the Southern Pacific."

"And is this your judgment of me also, Miss Crofton?" said I, rising from my seat.

"Oh, no, Mr. Potts. I would only suspect you of going off into the Tyrol, or the Styrian Alps, and forgetting all about us, amidst the glaciers and the cataracts."

"I wish you a good night, and a better opinion of your humble servant," said I, bowing.

"Don't go, Potts—wait a minute—come back. I have something to tell you."

I closed the door behind me, and hastened off, not, however, perfectly clear whether I was the injured man, or one who had just achieved a great outrage.

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